

A Man Named Pipes

PORTRAIT OF A PIONEER



Ellen Scofield Silvers, Editor

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RAAARD



JAMES CARTER PIPES

FOREWORD

BY
E. L. SPIVEY

The story that you will read in the following pages is about an unforgettable person. The first time I met him he was describing to a group of people the length of his pointed red nose as he looked at himself sideways through a mirror. This is unforgettable too.

If you have not met this man personally you have missed much of life's moral and spiritual tonic. We who have had the privilege are debtors to share with others something of the quality and character of this enriching personality. In order to accomplish this the editor traveled extensively, conferred with many relatives, friends, acquaintances, and communed much with the man himself.

Mrs. Ellen Silvers has arranged the intensely interesting materials in such a way that *The Man Named Pipes* becomes the self-interpretation of the pioneer that he was. In reading the unique experiences of this unique man you will discover at least five factors that contributed to his greatness:

First, his genuine intellectual honesty. The man named Pipes never sought to cover up when he knew he didn't know. He spoke with sincerity and conviction that which he knew and believed. No one doubted his integrity. This is why James Carter Pipes could communicate so well with the educated and the uneducated.

Second, his simplicity and humility. He spoke the language of the people and multitudes heard him gladly. His living was plain but dynamic, forthright but gentle. In his courage he was daring yet kind and helpful. He never blew his own horn but thousands have sung the praises of the man named Pipes.

Third, his love for people - especially people who hunger for truth. In the concern of his possessive faith no man was hopeless. He believed in and had compassion for anyone who was willing to try to help himself and keep an open mind. His penetrating faith, linked with truth and love, opened the minds of many persons.

Fourth, the sorrows and joys experienced in his own families and the family of God. Some one has said that it seems that God's greatest servants have been his greatest sufferers. J. C. Pipes has had his days of heartbreak, loneliness and disappointment; yet in them he found the Glory of God and Christian victory. His companions in marriage have contributed greatly to his greatness and these have made a place for themselves in the kingdom of the faithful. In his service to the Christian fellowship of believers he has been scorned, criticized, misunderstood, befriended, honored and loved. His love for Christ and devotion to them enabled him to stand fast and abound in the work of the Lord.

Fifth, his meditative mind and heart. Although in retirement, he maintains a continuing quest for truth and the will of God. A new idea he will reflect upon, pray about and test by experience and the scriptures. When once the idea is accepted it becomes a part of his being to live and share.

These are some of the discoveries you will make as you read the unfolding story of The Man Named Pipes.

† † † † †

A MAN NAMED PIPES

PART I: THE WORK BEGUN

CHAPTER 1

MY EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

The mountains of North Carolina have always been home to me. I was born on February 8, 1887, in a small town named Darby between Blowing Rock and Wilkesboro, in Wilkes County, in the heart of North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains. This section of the country was rough, tough, and famous for its corn whiskey and apple brandy. In fact, three government stills were in operation within a mile of our home!

Nevertheless my sister, my two brothers, and I grew up quietly on a small farm with our parents, Rufus and Docia Hendrix Pipes. Our home was a large log house with five rooms. The house had a spacious chimney in the middle of the house, and my grandmother lived in one end of the house and we lived in the other.

My grandmother meant a great deal in my early religious experience. At my birth she was already eighty-five years old, and a devout Christian; her most treasured possessions were a coarse-print New Testament and Psalms and an old-fashioned hymn book. Until her death when I was nine, I spent my nights with her, and every night she would read a Psalm, sing from the hymn book, and pray for me as I knelt by her bed. Many times she told the Lord she knew she couldn't be here much longer, and she pled with Him to make my life a blessing. I still remember those prayers; they have followed me all my life.

There were other times, I remember, when my father would take me on his lap and read to me about Lazarus and the rich man, the prodigal son, and other Bible people. I never tired of hearing those stories, and they made a lasting impression on me. Somehow, though I wandered far away from God, I never got away

from these early religious experiences; the seed was sown and would bear fruit.

During the summer our small farm was a busy place out-of-doors. It would take us a week to work our crop in the summer, and we did this every other week. The week in between, I hoed corn for a neighbor at 25¢ a day, \$1.50 per week. With this meager sum I bought my clothes.

Such time as we had to ourselves in the summertime was taken up with hunting and fishing during the week, and the swimming hole on Sunday afternoon.

* * *

My first school was quite a bit different from the schools now. We learned the alphabet which was pasted on a piece of cardboard, and our only book was "Webster's Blue Back Spelling Book." This was, in fact, our only book for two or three years! Our next book was Holmes' First Reader, and the others followed — the second, third, and fourth readers. We also studied arithmetic.

When I was about ten years old we had spelling classes every day, and spelling bees. For these we would stand in two lines, and when we could outspell our opponent he had to sit down, and the last one standing got a mark. At the end of each school year the teacher gave a prize to the child who had the most marks. One year I won the prize, and I still remember it — it was a book, "North Carolina Stories," about ten in all. There were stories of Sir Walter Raleigh, Bluebeard, and others, and I read them over and over.

Learning was not accomplished in any comfort. Our schoolhouses were log cabins with fireplaces, and our seats were benches with no back rests. However, the term was not nearly as long as now. We went to school for two months and then had six weeks of vacation to pull fodder, pick peas, and harvest the crop. Then we went back for another two months of school — the school year was four months long.

Although I was counted a good student, I quit school at fourteen, while I was in the fourth grade.



The Birthplace of J. C. Pipes, Darby, North Carolina



J. C. Pipes and Father, Rufus Pipes, in Front of Later Family Home in Murphy, North Carolina

During my early years in Darby, our church was a small one-room church. It had punch-in seats, that is seats hewn out of logs with holes bored in them and pegs which were the legs. There were no back rests.

We had preaching once a month, and our pastors were old mountain preachers — I could still name several of them. Some of them lived as much as thirty-five miles away. They often walked to our church, preached one or two hours, and received one dollar in payment.

At the preaching service, when prayer time came some of the old lay preachers would lead in prayer, and they always took at least thirty minutes. We all got down on our knees for the prayers. I can remember peeping at the man leading prayer to see if he looked as if he might ever quit, and if he didn't look like it, I would slip up, sit down quietly, and go to sleep. After the prayer my father would sit down, pull me over on his knees, and I would finish my nap this way during the sermon.

Sunday school only lasted about five months in the year, from the first of May through the last Sunday in September. The only Sunday school literature we had was the Bible and little Sunday school cards for the children with a picture on one side and the lesson on the other. Every Sunday morning the roll was called and we answered by quoting a verse of Scripture we had learned. Much of the Scripture I know now I memorized during my early childhood. On Sunday during the winter months we stayed at home or gathered in groups and played, except for our monthly preaching Sunday.

All these years my father always took me every Sunday. He never sent me to church by myself.

Once a year we had the annual revival in our church. The year I was fourteen years old, when time came for the meeting I had quit school and was working for a man who had a small grocery store. I didn't want to attend the revival, and my excuse was that I had to stay and mind the store for the owner while he went. But he was a splendid Christian gentleman, and interested in my salvation, so one day during the revival he walked out

of the store, locked the door, and told me that it was either go to church or stay outside and do nothing during services.

I went to the day meeting and sat through the services, but nothing the preacher said made any impression on me. The minister, Rev. Isaac Miller, invited everyone to the mourners' bench, or altar, to seek salvation. I wasn't going until a friend who had been saved during the revival came and pled with me to come seek salvation for my soul. I went forward, fell on my knees, and began to plead for forgiveness. I became broken up emotionally, because this was the only way I knew to be saved. I had no theology of salvation — I had always been taught that if we repented and prayed God would forgive and save us. For an hour I stayed on my knees weeping and praying while many Christians tried to instruct me. Finally the service closed and I was still unsaved, but I was under deep conviction and determined that I wouldn't stop seeking until I had found pardon.

I didn't go back to the meeting that night — I forget why — but I did go the next day. I listened to the sermon, but it didn't shed any light for me. When the time came to go forward, I didn't have to wait for someone to come get me; I hastened to respond. Again I fell on my knees, weeping and praying for forgiveness.

Finally I realized that all my prayers and tears could never merit for me salvation. When I knew this, I surrendered to the will of the Heavenly Father and suddenly, deep in my heart and mind and whole being, I could — and did — say, "Thy will be done." I told God, "If you want to take my life this minute and send my soul to Hell, I gladly yield to Thy will." When this happened underneath came the Everlasting Arms and an eternal peace came into my being. I remember that the congregation was singing, "Wonderful Peace." A portion of this song I shall never forget:

“Far away in the depth of my spirit today
Rolls a melody sweeter than Psalm;
In celestial-like strains
It unceasingly falls over my soul

Like an infinite calm.

Peace, Peace, Wonderful Peace
Coming down from the Father above,
Sweep over my spirit forever I pray
In wonderful billows of love."

This actually took place in my deepest experience. When I arose from my knees to bear testimony it seemed all the world had changed. Isaiah 55:12-13 literally became my own experience: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." II Corinthians 5:17 had actually taken place with me: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." I was truly a new creature — there was a new creation. I joined the church and was baptized.

I remember that they had to break the ice in the creek when a number of us were baptized, and my clothes froze on me before I got to the house where we dressed. I cannot say I didn't get cold, for I did. But it didn't make me sick.

† † † † †

CHAPTER 2: BACKSLIDING AND REPENTANCE

For a few months I lived my religion. As long as I continued to work for this Christian groceryman I attended preaching regularly at the monthly services. We had no Sunday school, and therefore no opportunity for Christian growth and knowledge.

After a time I went to work with a saw mill crew, and I lived with the men, all of them heavy drinkers of strong drink. For a while I stood up for my principles, but finally I succumbed to the temptation and joined them in evil ways. For the next five years my life was one of sin and shame.

Ever since that time I have suffered untold sorrow as a result of those years; I know that God for Christ's sake has forgiven and forgotten, but I cannot. I will not try to describe those years — suffice it to say that I joined with the crowd in almost every kind of sin. Sometimes there would come a pang of loneliness for God's forgiveness, but I would buy a pint of whiskey and drown such thoughts in drink.

I was nineteen years old when my father wrote me to come home. He had sold the farm and bought one further west, eight miles from Murphy, North Carolina, and he needed me to help him get ready to move. I went, and in November, 1907, we moved. We went on the train, which had a layover in Asheville for about five hours. While we were in Asheville my father and I went to a bar where I bought a quart of whiskey. It was in this place that I tasted my first and last beer; I couldn't even finish one glass. I turned to the whiskey bottle, took two drinks, and then a thought occurred to me.

I realized that I was moving away from the old gang with their evil habits forever, and if I was ever to break away from such a way of life, the time was now. I knew if I kept on drinking it would ruin me forever, so I handed that quart of whiskey to my father, who was a dram drinker, and that was the end of my drinking.

After we were settled in our new home I went to work for a Christian man, driving a team of mules on his farm. I still had one terrible habit, cursing. One

Saturday evening while I was working I decided to quit. I got through Sunday without cursing, but Monday morning I got mad at one of the mules and started out with an oath. I cut it in two, and that was the end of my cursing. It wasn't easy to do, and many times I was tempted, but I never broke over.

But still I hadn't returned to God. Often when I got in a rough crowd, the tempter would nudge me to go ahead and drink and curse like the rest, but I never did. I was leading a better life, but I was still no closer to God than before.

That summer of 1908, while I was home helping with the crops, a book agent came by selling religious books. I bought one; I've long since forgotten the title, but I was not halfway through the book when I was baptized in hell fire with conviction. My sins in all their blackness rolled on my soul; in my mind, I felt I was doomed by a righteous God and there was no hope.

For the next six years I prayed in every row of corn that I worked. I begged my mother and father to pray for me. Once in a while a little ray of light would break through and I would find rest, but then the gloom would come again.

One day I was clearing an eight-acre field that had been left untended for about fifteen years — the landlord who rented me land had given it to me for a year for clearing it. I remember that I was grubbing persimmon trees, praying hard all the time, when suddenly the light broke. With my mind's eye I saw the Cross, and I and all mankind with me were crucified in Jesus. I was dead, buried in Him, and my sinful life no longer existed in the mind of God, because I had literally died in Him and been raised to a new life. As the old man I had dishonored my Lord and Saviour, but He had never forsaken me. I was His and He was mine. I knew beyond a doubt that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1a) I realized that the only damning sin was the sin of unbelief: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten

Son of God.” (John 3:18)

I threw down my mattock, went to the bank of a little creek nearby, and sat there all evening praising God and shouting in my very soul. I was free in Jesus! I had been freed from my sins and cleansed of all sin! I suppose this was really my first call to preach. Somebody had to tell this Good News. I knew it; why not I?

† † † † †

CHAPTER 3: BACK TO SCHOOL

It was a lot more complicated than just making up my mind to surrender to God's call to preach, however; there were many obstacles to overcome. First of all, I was illiterate. I had quit school when I was in the fourth grade, and now I had no money to go back and begin again. Further, I already had a family, a wife and two children. I knew full well that preachers with my meager education and lack of experience seldom received a livelihood from their ministry. Many times I had seen preachers' wives hoeing corn for a peck of corn or a few pounds of fat meat to feed their children while their husbands were away holding meetings for which they were paid scarcely anything. I loved my family, and I determined not to let them suffer like that.

The way seemed dark indeed. In fact, I was ashamed to tell anyone that God had called as ignorant a man as I. However, there was one glimmer of light — the county had voted bonds and built a four-teacher schoolhouse in my community. In conversation with the principal of that school one day, he told me that when he was twenty-one years old he didn't even know the letters, and that in one school he learned enough to teach school himself.

If he could do it, so could I. Twenty-three at the time, I began to make plans to attend school, supposedly to teach. Later I would tell people God had called me to preach the Gospel.

I rented a three-room log cabin near the school for my family, gathered my crop, and took the janitor's job in the school to pay for my tuition. That first term lasted five months, and for those five months I averaged getting to bed at three o'clock in the morning. On Saturdays I chopped wood all day and sat up all night studying by a log fire.

By the time summer came, thanks to a gracious County Superintendent, I had made a second grade certificate and was given a job teaching a five months' school for which I received \$25.00 a month. I had made a crop that summer also, and I gathered my crop after school and on Saturdays. School was over by Christmas, and

needing more education, I entered a little Baptist school at Murphy for the spring session. Again when summer came I made a crop, and again I taught another five-month session, this time receiving \$35.00 a month.

After my third spring session at the school in Murphy, I made a first grade certificate. The fourth year I moved to Aquone in Macon County, North Carolina, and taught school for \$50.00 a month. I had just received my first month's check and cashed it, and was hurrying home to order my wife a dress from the Sears, Roebuck catalog. When I arrived I found her dead in the floor, our little three-year-old daughter Beulah trying to waken her.

This was on a Thursday. I buried her on Saturday.

I still hadn't made it public that I had been called to preach, but one month later, in October, 1915, I was ordained to the ministry by the Nantahala Church at Aquone.

The Sunday after my ordination I became supply pastor at Red Marble Church, where I preached until the fall of 1916. That autumn I registered as a student in Mars Hill College.

† † † † †

CHAPTER 4: POOR ENOUGH PREACHING

When I left for Mars Hill College in 1916, I left my two children, Beulah and Lewis, with my father. In July, 1917, I married Nora Buckner Fagan, a widow with two children of her own, Coy, age three, and Clifford, five years of age. She owned a four-room cottage and three acres of land, and after our marriage I brought my own two children to their new home. We now were a family of six.

During the four years at Mars Hill three more children were born to us: Lena, June, and William Robert.

* * *

I had been in college for about three months when a ministerial student who was pastor of Flag Pond Baptist Church in Tennessee came and asked me to supply for him one Sunday while he preached a trial sermon. I did so, and the church told me that if he were called to the other church, they wanted me to fill out the year until June, 1917.

He did take the other church, and I had my first pastorate. I went once a month, eighteen miles from Mars Hill across two big mountains, on a hired horse. The church paid me \$2.50 a trip, and I paid \$2.00 for the horse. This left me fifty cents a trip for my preaching; during the nine months I never missed a Sunday.

As June approached, I decided that if they wanted to call me for the following year I would hold a revival meeting, they would get religion, and then they would do better. I did hold the meeting, and on Sunday morning after the meeting I baptized thirty fine young people.

The baptismal service over, I went to the treasurer's home nearby, changed clothes, and came back to preach. When I got to the church, the treasurer was standing on the steps; when he saw me, he hollered, "I got it! I got it!"

"Got what?" I asked.

"I got a dollar a head for each one you baptized. That's what we always pay."

That morning they called me unanimously for an-

other year, and they asked me what I would come for. I thought that they had gotten religion and this would solve the financial problem; also, I grew up in a church that didn't believe in a set salary for preachers. So I told them that I would come for whatever they gave me as long as I could. Matters were left that way.

The next time I came back, they gave me \$2.50 after the worship service. I took it and said nothing. When I got home I paid \$2.00 for the horse, took my wife the 50¢, and told her that was a month's groceries. Again I said nothing, but the next time I started out I told my wife that this was to be my last trip to Flag Pond. To her question as to whether I planned to quit preaching, I told her "No, but I'm not going to preach any more to that stingy bunch. I can make \$4.50 working here on Saturdays and not have to pay for a horse out of it."

That Saturday I went ahead and preached at the morning service. When I had finished I asked the chairman of the board of deacons to preside, and I stood up and resigned. He then asked me, "We just called you a month ago. What's wrong?"

I said, "Brother, you don't need a preacher: you need a horse. You pay that horse \$2.00 a trip, and you pay me 50¢!"

He asked, "What will you come for?"

"I will come for \$8.33 1/3 a trip, which is \$100.00 a year."

"Well," he replied. "Give me until tomorrow to see what I can do."

"Very well," I answered.

He owned a large country store and that evening he made a canvass of the members who came to the store, and most of them came.

They never paid me less than \$12.00 a trip after that, and before the year was out the church went half time. The year before the church had paid a total of \$150.00 for pastor's salary and all other expenses. That year they gave a total of \$1,500.00, and in addition bought a new piano and gave \$500.00 to Carson Newman College.

Today that church is a full time church, with a pastor living on the field. And all of this because a

preacher was converted and the Lord through him converted the church!

Up until that time I had had a belief that if a minister opened his mouth, the Lord would fill it. I tried this once; I have never tried it since. The Lord and I working together were poor enough preaching.

* * *

After I had been in college for about a year, Dr. Walter N. Johnson, North Carolina Convention secretary, organized what he called "Mobile Schools." Because there was one in nearby Waynesville, Dr. R. L. Moore, President of Mars Hill College, said to me, "I'm going to excuse you from school this week and let you go to this school. I believe it will do you more good than a week here."

Needless to say, I went. The director was J. A. McCain; Dr. Hersey Davis' father preached; Dr. Walter E. Wilson taught "Stewardship and Missions" by Cook; and Rev. Kirk, father of one of our missionaries, taught "How the Death of Jesus Saves Us."

In the mission book was a chapter on tithing, and for the first time I became convinced that 10¢ of every dollar that came into my possession was not mine, but God's.

When I got home I called my wife and we sat down before the fire. I told her what I had learned about tithing, and I shall never forget what she said: "If 10¢ of a dollar does not belong to us, we will pay it. We will not steal from God."

At that time my total income was \$150.00 a year. I had four children, and was going to college. Three years later I graduated from Mars Hill, and I only owed the college about \$50.00. Many times I thought I would have to quit and go to work full time, but Dr. Moore would tell me to stay until the last meal was gone and then come to him. The meal in the barrel never failed and the cow never went dry. The Eternal God never forsook me. I had learned what Abraham meant when he said "Jehovah Jireh." The Lord will provide.

* * *

When I had been in Mars Hill about two years, my home church wrote and asked me to come hold a revival for them. I was rather stuck on myself, and I thought: "Yes, I'll go show them how a college man can preach." My father had not wanted me to go to Mars Hill — he felt that if the Lord wanted me to preach He would fill my mouth with His message. Many of the older folks agreed with him, but in spite of this I had felt that I must make preparation to represent the Lord the best I could. And so it was doubly important for me to make a good impression in that small country church.

I arrived for the Sunday evening service to preach to a packed house, including my father. That night my mind closed and I hollered, sweated, and hollered some more. I made such a mess my father was ashamed of me, and I wished desperately that the floor would open and swallow me up.

As we were on our way home somebody said, "I wonder what was wrong with the service tonight?"

Nobody said anything until a half-wit in the crowd spoke up. "It was all thunder and no rain or lightning." He had correctly defined the message.

We had two more services, each about like the first one. By Wednesday I went through the service almost sweating blood, and that night I decided I would go to the church Thursday morning and confess that I just couldn't preach, catch the train, and go home.

Each morning I had been going to the woods to pray, and I thought I would do this once more my last morning. I went, and got on my knees, but my prayer seemingly didn't get any higher than my head. Discouraged, I got up, started back down the hollow, and sat down on a large flat rock. At once God spoke to me. He said, "Have faith in God." I then took my little New Testament from my pocket, turned to the eleventh chapter of Mark, and read that portion of Scripture. I got up, went to the church, and preached on "Have faith in God" and through the rest of the week the heart of the message was "Have faith in God."

Sunday morning forty-eight people joined the church

by profession of faith. God had to humble a preacher and teach him that "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Zech. 4:6)

* * *

In 1918 I was elected associational missionary for the French Broad Association on a half time basis, for which I was to receive \$150.00 a year plus whatever the churches and mission points gave. I had seven preaching points that I had to make at least once each month, and I was still pastor at Flag Pond Church half time. During one summer's vacation I went into this mission area and spent only three nights at home during the entire three months! I held meetings in logging camps, school houses, and small churches. Shuford Jenkins, a Mars Hill ministerial student, stayed with me all summer.

I had one small church where I preached once a month on Saturday. One member and his wife had a family of thirteen children — I always knew I would have a congregation for Brother Laws and his family always came!

One Sunday after preaching he came to me and said, "Preacher, I like you. I want you to spend the night with me the next time you come to preach."

I told him I would, and when the time came he was there with all his children. After the service I filled my Ford with children — the parents insisted on walking. I drove about half a mile on the highway until one of the boys directed me up a hollow. I drove as far as I could this way and finally the boy said, "Park here. We'll have to walk the rest of the way."

The home was a log cabin with a large fireplace and only two beds that I could see, though there was a shed-like side room.

After a good supper we sat down before a roaring fire to talk and enjoy each other's company, but I kept worrying about where we were all going to sleep. As the evening wore on I became increasingly concerned about the sleeping problem. There were five girls between the ages of 14 and 18. Finally the father said, "Boys, get your shoes off. 'Bout bedtime."

The boys began to pull off their shoes and pitch them

over their shoulders into the corner of the room. Then the father said, "Preacher, get your Bible. Read and pray and we'll go to bed." And I did.

Then one of the boys went back to a bed, pulled a ladder out from under it, set it up against the wall, pushed up a trap door into the loft, and went through. One by one they went until all the boys were gone. Then the father said, "Preacher, there's another good bed up there. Go find it!" This I did, and I slept that night in a spot where I could lie down and touch the roof with my hand.

Some weeks later I held a revival there and baptized about eight of the children of this family.

But the story doesn't end there. Several years later I was holding a revival meeting in Woodruff, South Carolina, and a man searched me out with a request. He said that there was a little woman on a back street of that town dying with tuberculosis, and she wanted to see me. Of course I went to the home, and there on a bed was a small, pale-faced woman in the last stages of the disease. It was one of the girls I had baptized from that home.

She said, "Preacher, when you spent the night with us and slept in the loft, I knew you were a Jesus man, and I gave my heart to him. I'm going to be with Him in a few days, and I will tell Him all about it."

I thanked God, and still thank Him, that I slept in a loft and thereby revealed Him who had no place to lay His head. This story has not ended — it will never end throughout all eternity.

* * *

In 1919 Rev. Shuford Jenkins, the aforementioned friend of mine at Mars Hill, came to me with a letter from the Hot Springs Church. They wanted him to hold a revival for them himself or, if he was unable, to send someone in his place. He asked me to go for him and since it was during summer vacation I agreed to go.

I went on Sunday, and at the first service there were thirty-five people present. I announced a service for Monday morning at 10:00 o'clock, and when I got there only one other person came, an old Baptist preacher.

We prayed together and I said to him, "They aren't coming, so I must go out and find them. I'll look around today and go visit them tomorrow."

That day I spent looking over the community, and then I told the old preacher where I had decided to go the next morning — across the river where the homes were nothing but shacks. He said, "My, my preacher, that's the hell hole of Hot Springs. All they do is make and sell whiskey and all other kinds of wickedness."

"Then that's where they need God," I said.

So the next morning I got up, dressed, ate breakfast, and started out. When I crossed the river and looked up at those shanties, my heart almost failed. I breathed a prayer for courage and went up the highway above all the houses and came down on a creek above the settlement, all the time praying for courage to go into a home.

I saw a man on the porch of one of the houses with his knee tied up and his leg lying up in a chair, and I said to myself, "There's a crippled one. I can run and get away from him!" So I went over and spoke to him and told him that I was holding a meeting at the church, and wanted him to come.

"I ain't coming," he said with a glint in his eye. "I'm as mean as hell, but I ain't going to join that bunch of hypocrites over there!"

About that time his wife came to the door, and I told her what I had told her husband, and she said she hadn't been in church for ten years and wasn't about to begin now.

When I asked them if I might have prayer with them, the man said, "Pray if you want to. I don't guess it'll hurt us." It was a poor prayer, I thought, and I got up off my knees and left.

That was about all I could take that day. I prayed all afternoon, asking God to tell me what He wanted me to do. The impression was strong to go back to that same house; "I sent you there," I felt God was telling me.

So the next morning I went back. I didn't see the man until some time later, but the lady was more friendly. She told me that her father was an old Baptist preacher, and she got a book to show me the

churches where he had been pastor. I read the names and discovered that the churches were in Cherokee County where I had lived before I came to Mars Hill. I asked her what she knew about the churches, and she said they had lived in the very same community where I had lived.

Then she asked me if I knew a girl named Bessie Gregory in that same county — she had been her best friend and they had gone to school together. I said, “Bessie Gregory is my dead wife, and if God took her to heaven so I could come to Hot Springs and win her old friend, there must have been joy in the presence of the angels when she went home.”

She said, “Preacher, pray for me,” as she slipped out of her chair onto her knees. After I had prayed, she said, “I will be at church tonight.” She came, and on the second night she came and surrendered to the Lord. She went back into that “hell hole” and led twenty-eight people to Christ, and I baptized them.

But this was not the end. I had two Sunday nights in the month free and the Hot Springs Church asked me to supply for them on these nights because they had no pastor, and I agreed to do so. A month later I went to Hot Springs on the train to preach for the Sunday night service, and when I got off the train a man approached me with a large bundle wrapped in paper.

“Preacher, do you know me?” he asked.

“I’m afraid I don’t,” I had to admit.

“I’m Mack Plemmons,” he stated, “the man with the crippled leg. You came and invited me to church. I haven’t seen you again until right now, because every time I saw you coming I’d slip out and hide until you were gone. I got away from you, but I couldn’t get away from that prayer you prayed that day on my porch. The day you were baptizing all those people, I got on my knees in my house and the Lord gloriously saved me. As you can see, I’ve brought my clothes. I want you to go to the river with me and baptize me.”

I said, “Mack, I can’t do it. I must be authorized by the church.”

“Yes, you can,” he declared, “and afterward I will

go with you to the church and they'll receive me."

I went with him, changed my clothes for the ones he had brought for me, and baptized him in the French Broad River. The church did honor the baptism and accepted him into full fellowship.

This couple has long since gone to be with the Lord, but I still think of the incident as one like Phillip and the eunuch — I baptized Mack Plemmons before he had been accepted by the church.

† † † † †

CHAPTER 5: THE LORD WILL PROVIDE

In 1923 I went to Spartanburg, South Carolina, to hold a revival. The meeting began on Sunday night, and all week we had large crowds.

On Wednesday night the pastor of this church and I were invited by a fellow county pastor to spend the night with him. That evening as we visited together, talking about the meeting, this pastor said, "Brother Pipes, I like your preaching, the people like it, and they will continue to come and hear you. But you will have no results. I've been here for years, I've been to every meeting, and the preachers have been good, but no results have ever come and they'll not come this time."

Of course I was discouraged, but suddenly God spoke to me in the words of Jesus: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them . . . and all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Never before had I had those two passages speak to me with the conviction with which they spoke that night. I stopped the conversation, quoted the words to them, and asked, "Will you get on your knees with me here and now and claim this promise from our Lord? We will not get up until He has answered it."

They agreed, and we began the circle of prayer. I was supposed to close the prayer, but my turn never came. Suddenly the pastor whom we were visiting sprang to his feet, crying out: "O, God! Watch them come to the Lord! Multitudes are being saved — I've never seen such a revival!" All during the night he would wake me crying out, "Watch them come! Praise the Lord!"

During the next ten days almost two hundred people made professions of faith and joined the churches — over a hundred in the church where I was holding the revival, and the rest in the Methodist Church.

In all my experience I have never worked so hard. Several times I was called from my bed in the middle of the night to go and pray with people under conviction as they came to the Lord and were saved.

Surely this was God at work in the Holy Spirit, convicting, converting, and saving His people.

* * *

The Northside Baptist Church in Woodruff, South Carolina, called me as pastor in 1926, and I accepted the call. After I had been there about six months, an epidemic of influenza broke out, and I got it. Unable to overcome the illness, I got weaker and weaker until I had to be admitted to Mary Black Hospital in Spartanburg. After about two weeks in that hospital, I entered a period of delusion in which I existed for about four weeks. During that time, it was as if all the lights in the world had gone out for me — I saw the end of the world and all the horrors that attended it. I lived through Job's experience; I explored the inner world as recorded by A. T. Boison in his book, "Exploration of the Inner World;" I was the "Ancient Mariner" and lived his torment. During my illness I had been moved to Broad Oak Sanitorium in Morganton, North Carolina, but I knew nothing of the transfer.

Of all the experiences I had during those black days, one stands out as by far the most terrible. I hesitate to tell it, for fear it might be misunderstood, but it has a deep spiritual truth in it that I must share. First of all let me say that as for my wife Nora, who was the subject of this horrible delusion, no more virtuous woman ever lived.

In my delirium, I thought I actually died and went to a literal hell of fire and brimstone. For days I was engulfed in a deep, bottomless pit with flames lapping around me. In my imagination my wife whom I dearly loved had become the most lewd woman in the world, and one day she appeared on the brink of that pit with one of her lovers and looked down at me. They seemed to curse me with bitter oaths, and they laughed and taunted me in my sufferings.

My first reaction was one of bitter hatred, and I despised them with all the power of my soul. But my next feeling was one of pity, and I found myself praying for them. I begged God to lay on me all their sins and let me suffer in their stead, and as I prayed I found

myself saying these words: "Lay on me the sins of all the world and pour on me all His wrath." Somehow as I said this, hell, was suddenly transformed into heaven, and hell became the gateway to glory with all its joys; hell was annihilated by prayer and God was glorified, even in hell itself.

This was my experience in hell.

* * *

Altogether I spent about thirteen weeks in these two hospitals. When I came out, my theological house had crashed around me — I didn't know what to believe. If I were ever to preach again, a more substantial basis for my ministry would have to be built.

I moved back to Asheville with my family, and for four months worked in a furniture factory, until the plant closed. I then obtained a job with the Asheville Times selling mail subscriptions in the nineteen counties of western North Carolina. The salary was a good one for those days: \$35.00 a week, 5¢ a mile for car travel, and \$10.00 a week bonus to the one of five salesmen who sold more papers than the others. I won half of all the bonuses.

All of this time I was trying to reconstruct my theological foundation. I had never lost faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ, and on this basic fact, I knew that my place was in the ministry while I ironed out my other spiritual problems. I accepted the call to become pastor of the Riverside Baptist Church in Asheville, a position I held for nine years.

During my early ministry and continued soul-searching as pastor of Riverside, Dr. Walter N. Johnson, Dr. W. M. Poteat, Sr., and J. R. Mosley organized what Dr. Johnson called a "retreat" at Mars Hill. I had known Dr. Johnson for several years and had confidence in him, and I began attending the retreats — they were held for twelve years, during which time I missed two sessions.

The Retreats were held every year for two weeks, with sessions five days a week from 9:00 A. M. until 1:00 P. M. Dr. Johnson taught one hour on stewardship and missions, Dr. Poteat opened the New Testament, and

Mr. Mosley spoke on living present experience with Jesus. One hour was given to an experience meeting led by one of the group attending these meetings.

These experiences revolutionized my entire life and point of view. In previous interpretation I had been an extreme literalist who didn't believe God was seeking to save the world now, only that He was calling out the called. I had charts of the ages, and I believed that the Lord would come and set up His Kingdom here on earth and then He would save the world. I hadn't believed that the Kingdom was present and available to all men — I had thought the King was absent, and there could be no Kingdom with an absent King. As a result, I had been extremely narrow-minded and pharisaical, my ministry had been partially paralyzed, and I had not seen the importance of mission work. In my opinion, when God was ready to save the world He would do it. Somehow, in spite of all this, my ministry had been blessed.

But now things began to change. Dr. Johnson gave me a vision of stewardship and missions that I had never had before. Dr. Poteat made the New Testament a living, vital, present message. Mr. Mosley revealed Jesus alive, experiential, and available to every life. I became a new man with a new vision of the New Testament, a new vision of stewardship and missions, and most of all a new vision of Jesus available to me now. I had a new message, with power to preach it. I had indeed rebuilt my theological house — this time on the Solid Rock.

* * *

One year at the Retreat, Dr. Johnson said to me, "Pipes, tomorrow at the experience period you bring us a fresh experience with the Lord if you have to stay up all night to get it. If you don't get it be honest enough to tell us. We don't want an old dry sermon outline!"

I went home and prayed all afternoon trying to get a fresh experience with the Lord. By night I was no nearer than when I had started. I went to bed determined to spend the night in prayer, but at three in the morning I was no nearer than I had been. I thought, "I can be honest and tell them I don't have a fresh experience with the Lord," and I went to sleep.

Early the next morning I built a fire in the cook stove, woke my wife, and while she got breakfast I got my cow feed and drove about a mile to milk my cow. It was raining and I had to hunt her in the pasture, so of course I was all wet when I poured the feed in the feed box and sat down to milk her.

Suddenly I realized that I was having a fresh experience with the Lord. He had never given me that particular milk before. When I realized that, the old cow caught afire and was not burned — it was not a burning bush but a burning cow. God had been trying to reveal Himself and I was too blind to see it! When I got in my car and stepped on the starter, God spoke again in the words of the Bible, "Power, power, all power belongeth to God." I rode home and then to Mars Hill with my fresh experience and a new sense of the power of God. I became aware that every breath I drew was a fresh experience with the Lord. It was Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning who said:

"Earth's crammed full of Heaven, and every
bush afire with God,
But only those of us who see it take off our shoes;
the others
Sit around and pluck blackberries."

* * *

After I had been at Riverside two years, we planned a revival. I was deeply concerned about the lost people of our Sunday school and church, and I wanted to see them saved. I planned the meeting and prayed that God would give us a glorious revival with many people won to Him.

The time came, the evangelist arrived, and we started our services on Sunday morning. Things were going well until Wednesday evening; that night, the message was a complete failure, from a human point of view. In fact, some of the deacons came to me and said, "Pastor, why did you get that man? We can't have a revival with that kind of preaching."

I spent a sleepless night, and at breakfast the next

morning I told my wife I was going somewhere and to tell the visiting minister that I would see him at suppertime. Then I went to the church, let myself in with my key, and locked the door behind me. Making my way to a back Sunday school room, I opened my little New Testament to the first chapter of Acts, knelt between the seats, and for two hours read the first four chapters of Acts until my very soul was saturated with them.

After reading these words over and over, I thought I could pray, and I began to do so. I hadn't prayed three minutes until Acts 4:30 became a living experience: "When they had prayed the place where they were assembled was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." That stone church house didn't move physically, but to me the whole building was shaking, and I was filled with the Holy Spirit. (I write this in deep humility; to God be the glory and honor.) I got up off my knees knowing that God had spoken to me and that all the devils in hell couldn't hinder a great revival in that church. Somehow I didn't want to go home, and when I remembered a man near Mars Hill whose wife was dying with tuberculosis, I decided to visit him; once he had prayed all night for me while I was in the hospital.

When I got there I found him in the field working. Together we went into his home and had prayer with his wife, and when I left she was praising the Lord. On my way back home if a patrolman had seen me he might have arrested me for being drunk — and so I was. I was drunk on the Spirit of God.

That night there were seven professions of faith. For the next ten days God poured out his spirit on the evangelist and the church, and we experienced one of the greatest revivals and ingatherings in the history of that church.

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Riverside Baptist Church, Asheville, North Carolina which J. C. Pipes pastored for nine years before beginning his state Convention work.



J. C. Pipes first picture with the Convention

PART II: THE VISION EMERGING

CHAPTER 1: THE BEGINNING

My work with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina began in quite a roundabout manner, and on a temporary basis. It lasted for twenty years and four months.

In the month of September, 1937, Dr. J. T. Henderson, executive secretary of the Brotherhood of the Southern Baptist Convention, had been invited to come to the western part of North Carolina to speak on the Cooperative Program of Southern Baptists. Meetings had been planned for twenty-two places, and all arrangements made. Rev. James Ivey, pastor of the West Asheville Baptist Church, was to go with Dr. Henderson to the various preaching points, drive his car, and introduce the speaker.

However, at the last minute James Ivey was unable to go, and when he asked me to take his place, I consented to do so. I thought my only obligation was to take Dr. Henderson around, and introduce him in the various meetings.

Our first meeting was at Franklin, and when we arrived I introduced the speaker for the two-hour program, and sat down. Dr. Henderson spoke for about forty minutes, and when he was finished there was still about an hour left before lunch, and nothing to fill in with. And all the meetings were scheduled for two hours!

After we got in my car and were on our way to the next engagement, Dr. Henderson said, "Young man, you were supposed to take part of that time. You must do it; I can't fill all that time!"

I had just finished a Retreat at Mars Hill where Dr. E. M. Poteat, Sr., had spoken for two weeks on the "Conversions of Peter" using the following outline:

- (1) Conversion to salvation - John 1
- (2) Conversion to soul-winning - Mark 1

- (3) Conversion from a material to a spiritual view - Matthew 16
- (4) Conversion from anti-missionary to missionary - Acts 10

While Dr. Henderson drove for the next two hours I digested those two weeks of lectures into a one-hour talk, and delivered it eighteen times in those meetings!

Later I learned that when Dr. Henderson had gotten back to Raleigh he told Mr. Huggins, "If there's any man God can use to change the attitude of those mountain churches it's that long-nosed, red-headed fellow called Pipes."

It was as a result of these meetings and others like them that I was employed in the field of stewardship for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. I began my work with the Convention on September 1, 1937, with a leave of absence for four months from Riverside Baptist Church, because I wasn't sure the Lord wanted me in Convention work. I retired December 31, 1957, at the age of seventy.

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CHAPTER 2: THE VISION GLIMPSED

As an employee of the Convention, my first project began November 1, 1937. I was to attend the annual associational meetings and from these meetings work out stewardship revivals in the associations. The need was desperate — in fourteen associations with over five hundred churches the gifts to all Convention objects (including the orphanage and the Baptist hospital) was less than \$12,000! There were over five hundred other churches that gave nothing to any object of the Convention! Most of the churches had no program of finance, simply taking an offering for the pastor and Sunday school literature.

So at the annual meetings in each association I planned dates for as many revivals as I could, in as many churches as I could, and with as many volunteer workers as I could. That first fall we worked in six associations with these stewardship revivals, using laymen and women who would volunteer to work with us.

In each revival, we used a small pamphlet Mr. Huggins had written on stewardship and the Baptist program, and we studied Baptist beliefs, stewardship in the Bible, missions, and how and why to tithe. Our main object was to lead churches to set goals for missions through the Cooperative Program and to build budgets that included the whole church program.

For each revival, I would meet my group of workers in the afternoon, teach them a chapter of Huggins' little book, and try to inspire them to go out and sell missions to the churches. Every afternoon we would report on the evening before. Some reports would be encouraging, while others would not.

Each worker carried copies of Huggins' booklet, which we sold for five cents apiece — this way we left them with something permanent. Years later I found people who would refer to this pamphlet, or quote from it.

My work went on this way for several years, and while some churches would not let us in, each year we

were able to enlist more and more churches. It seemingly never failed that churches with a Woman's Missionary Union were the most receptive, and I still enthusiastically say, "Bless those women who were such a help to us in the Master's work."

* * *

During this same time, Mr. Huggins worked out what we called preliminary associational meetings. At these meetings we would present to the various churches their associational letter forms. Each letter had an extra page on which the name of the church was printed, along with several columns marked off. In the first column was the amount the church had given to missions, in the second the amount given to the orphanage, and the third column would be blank.

Before such a meeting, I would travel to the association involved, and make arrangements for a free dinner for the leaders and deacons of the churches of that association, with the help of the Woman's Missionary Union of some church. The ladies would prepare the meal and bring it to the church where the meeting was being held, and we would pay the WMU for the meal.

When the meeting time came, we would eat dinner, and then I would make a talk on our mission work. The church letters were then passed out to each church, and I would go down the line of churches and try to persuade them to accept a goal for both the orphanage and the Cooperative Program.

These meetings were held all over the state, but I remember one in particular. It was in one of the most backward, anti-missionary associations. When I arrived there were at least a hundred and fifty people present, and the women had fixed a table at least a hundred and fifty feet long, and every inch of it loaded with food!

I thought to myself, "If I have to pay for all this food, Mr. Huggins will fire me."

Immediately I called the moderator aside and asked him how much the food would be.

"I'll ask them, and come back and tell you," he said.

Minutes passed, but finally he came back and asked,

“Would \$15.00 be too much?”

Without even answering, I quickly took out my check-book and wrote him a check for that amount and gave it to him, before they could change their minds. I was glad to get that off my mind!

As usual, we ate dinner first, and then went into our meeting. I knew that in this association with more than five thousand members, less than \$100.00 had been sent to all mission causes. So I made my talk, and then passed out the church letters and began going down the list asking each church to accept an amount for a goal.

I went through the whole list and never got one single goal accepted. Disgusted as I was, I knew I must never get angry and “skin them out,” so I kept my temper and my tongue.

Finally, though, I had to say something, and so I told them the following story:

A church down in Georgia had raised \$4.50 for missions one year, and at the end of the year it was still in the church treasury. Finally at a business meeting the question came up of where to send that money. Church members argued back and forth for an hour, until finally a deacon arose and made a motion that that little old \$4.50 wasn't worth all the time lost in arguing; a whole hour of good preaching time had been spent, and so he moved that they take the money, buy washpans, join the Hardshells and go to washing feet!

And so at the end of the story, I told that group that that little old \$100.00 they had given through the Convention last year wasn't worth all the trouble we had gone to — in fact, it wouldn't much more than pay for the expense of that meeting! So I suggested that we take \$100.00, buy washpans, join the Hardshell churches in that section, and go to washing feet.

They saw the ridiculousness of the situation and laughed at themselves. I dismissed the meeting on that note, and we left. But the next year we went back with the same type of meeting, and three-fourths of the churches accepted goals!

After that second meeting I drove about twenty miles to spend the night with a pastor friend in another association, and I told him I felt like I had sweat blood. He said he understood. That wasn't the only time I felt that way — many times the work was so discouraging that it took a long time to see any results.

I remember what Mr. Huggins had said to me when I began my work with the Convention: "There are three things you'll have to have: horse sense, a warm heart, and a tough hide."

* * *

In another meeting of a similar type, we had had our dinner and the people had assembled for our meeting. As always, I had told the group before I began my talk that if they had questions just to break in and ask them.

During my talk that night an old deacon stopped me and said, "Preacher, you said to ax you any question if we wanted to. I want to ax you one."

"Brother, ax on," I replied.

"How long you been preaching?"

I told him, "About twenty-five years."

"Well," he said, "You ain't starved, have you?"

I said, "No, I haven't starved, and besides, I've lived on my preaching."

"Praise the Lord," he said, "I've told these preachers that if they would just trust the Lord, He would feed them if He had to send the ravens to do it!"

I replied, "Brother, it's not the buzzards God's interested in, it's you two-winged birds called deacons. If the buzzards had been as disobedient to God as you all, the prophets would've starved long ago!"

"You may be about right, preacher," he admitted.

I continued with my talk, and then began to go down the line of churches, taking up this matter of accepting goals for their churches. The deacon who had interrupted was from a very small church way back at Short Off Mountain, and when we came to his little church he said, "Preacher, put my church down for \$25.00, and if no one else pays it I will."

Later I checked on that church, and they had sent that exact amount to the treasurer of the Baptist State

Convention. I found out two things in my work with the Convention: If you ever got a pledge or goal they would always pay it, and if you loved people you could say what you wanted to to them and they would never resent it.

* * *

Gradually, as the months passed, a pattern began to develop in my work to establish a sense of stewardship in this part of North Carolina. Too often the pastor was not in sympathy with what we were doing; sometimes after we had worked out a program and a budget they would come on their particular Sunday (most churches had preaching only on certain Sundays of each month) and do away with all we had accomplished.

It became quite obviously necessary to enlist the pastors in the purposes we had come to fulfill, and win their cooperation. When I had thought out a plan I went back to the Raleigh office to discuss it with Mr. Huggins. When I had gained his approval, I came back to the mountains and began to put my idea into operation.

My idea was this: to hold association-wide pastors' schools. As a foundation for much of the rest of this book, I must spend some time describing in detail these schools, and what we hoped to accomplish with them.

First of all, we knew that we would be working with men who, though they had not had the advantage of college and seminary training, were fine men and good preachers. The only problem was that many of them had very little vision outside of their own immediate fields. Many of them, according to a great old mountain preacher, lived in isolation with very little fellowship with their brethren.

Therefore, we started our one-week preachers' schools, and the first one was held in the Tennessee River Association at Franklin Grove Church. During the week in this church we reached eight of the pastors of that association, and at the close of the school not only did that group invite us to come back, but the Bryson City church invited us to meet with them! Not only that, but one day of the school some of the preachers of the Tuckaseegee Association came to visit, and

with our happy approval, arranged a preachers' school at Lovedale Baptist Church in Sylva, North Carolina. At this school we enjoyed a great week with eighteen pastors attending in addition to the teachers.

My work had begun in earnest. Word of the revivals spread, and we began to hold them in places from Murphy to Mount Airy. They became an annual affair even in some of the larger churches. For instance, in the Buncombe Association the First Baptist Church of Asheville began a school which has continued annually for twenty-five years, and is now known as the Leadership Revival, combined with the Central Training School.

As we began work on each preachers' school, we would work through the Woman's Missionary Union of the church and ask them to agree to furnish a lunch for the pastors each day for five days, as well as furnish overnight accommodations for all who wanted to stay over night. When these details were worked out, I would then work out a program. I would always try to get a good preacher for the week, and each day he would bring a message. Also daily I would speak on stewardship and missions, and other related subjects.

Always the pastors who had had college and seminary training gave unselfishly of their time to assist in these meetings, and gradually one of these men, Dr. J. C. Canipe, became a regular co-worker. The State Convention paid his expenses and gave him a small honorarium, and it was a pleasure to have him. All the preachers loved him, and as we worked through our one-week preachers' school, he caught a vision of a larger school with greater possibilities.

Making plans for a six-week school term, Dr. Canipe provided sleeping quarters in a large room in his church at Boone, North Carolina, and secured several double-decker beds. Our Convention furnished books for the preachers, and in the school the first year the average attendance was over forty.

The following year the Convention purchased the Fruitland property and the Fruitland Bible Institute was born in 1945 under Dr. Canipe's leadership. Supported by our Baptist State Convention of North Carolina,

Fruitland has reached more than a thousand pastors who have not had the privilege of a formal education. With a registration average of one hundred and fifty each year, Fruitland has revolutionized many lives and churches. Truly God has done and is doing marvelous things!

* * *

For our first preachers' school in one association, I prepared a program of the week, and mailed copies to all the pastors in the association. At the end of the week, one of the pastors who hadn't missed a single session came to me with an interesting story. He said that when he had received his copy of the program, and had seen what it was, he threw it down and stomped it into the ground. "I am not going to join that bunch of Conventionites and modernists," he had vowed in sincere indignation. But someone had persuaded him to come, and he told me, "I have really had my eyes opened; this is the greatest thing I've ever found!" And the following year we had the school in his church!

But the story doesn't end there. He entered Fruitland Baptist Institute, and continued to study until he had finished all the courses they taught! From that time on he cooperated with the association and the Convention, and led his church to give through the Cooperative Program and all the objects of the Convention.

* * *

In this same school there was a pastor visiting from another association; and as we were introducing ourselves in the group, he said that the only man in the group whom he knew was Brother Pipes.

I didn't remember ever having met him, but after the meeting that night he told me this story. In a former country pastorate I had taught the book of Romans on succeeding Wednesday nights, and on the first Wednesday night he had been present. Merely a teen-ager, he had nevertheless become interested and every Wednesday night he had walked the three miles from his home to the church until the study was completed. Out of this experience, he said, he had been converted and called to preach. Although he was from

a Methodist family, he became a Baptist minister. Since that time he has served as pastor and associational missionary, and is one of our most valuable ministers.

According to the Bible, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11) It may be that when we get to Heaven the things we have forgotten have been used to bring salvation to someone, and glory to His name.

* * *

Once a Baptist lady in Newland invited us to hold a preachers' week in her home. She had a large home, and a small chapel built in the basement. She indicated that she would be willing to entertain eighteen to twenty men for just the cost of the food, and so we planned the week. To help me, I was able to secure Dr. Walter N. Johnson and Friend J. R. Mosley, both of whom have since gone to be with the Lord.

When the time arrived, about twenty pastors attended, some of whom stayed and some of whom commuted from nearby communities. All in all it was a wonderful week; Dr. Johnson spoke twice daily on stewardship, and Friend Mosley on Christian experience.

As the week progressed, several times Dr. Johnson suggested to me that we have an experience meeting, and give everyone an opportunity to give their testimonies. Knowing Dr. Johnson as I did, and realizing how he frowned upon emotionalism and shouting — and knowing the area better than he did — I discouraged this idea.

But the very last morning of the meeting they sent me to the post office, and that being over a mile away, plus a wait for the mail to be put up, I was some time getting back to the meeting. Sure enough, when I got back they were in the midst of a testimony meeting! And just as surely, they had not gone on long until someone began to praise the Lord in a loud voice. And we were off! For some time we had "shoutin' meeting" — and everyone joined in except Dr. Johnson. Finally

things quieted down enough for the service to be dismissed, and everybody went to their rooms. When I reached Dr. Johnson's room and went in for his reaction, he said to me, "Pipes, they pulled the whistle and blew out all the power and the train stopped with no steam to pull the mountain."

I replied, "Dr. Johnson, I told you what would happen! So you don't have anyone to blame but yourself. In fact, I rather believe in praising the Lord myself. You know, David said 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.'"

Later I went to Friend Mosley's room and he was still shouting. He said, "Pipes, I'd like to see Johnson shout, but he's too big a fish to shout on this side of heaven. He'll shout over there."

He continued, "You can catch a big fish with a little fish, but you can never catch a little fish with a big one — they're afraid of them!"

As we left Newland that afternoon, all the way down the mountain Mosley kept saying, "Glory! Glory! Thank you, Lord!"

Dr. Johnson was absolutely silent. But finally, able to stand it no longer, Dr. Johnson (having given a book to Mosley for his opinion of it) demanded, "I would like to know if you are talking about my book or something else!"

Mosley said, "No, no! I'm talking about the marvelous beauty all around us."

It may have been beautiful to him, but everybody else was too tense to enjoy the ride over snow and ice-covered roads!

CHAPTER 3: THE VISION CONFIRMED

After I had been with the Convention about two years, my friends began to advise me to leave that work and go back into the pastorate. Some even said that if I stayed too long with the Convention, no church would call me. All of this disturbed me, because above all I wanted to do the will of the Lord.

And then I remembered that God had wet the fleece for Gideon. Believing that he could also do the same for me, I challenged Him to do so. I put out the fleece, and this is how I did it. In prayer I asked the Lord to lead some pastor to invite me to conduct a revival in his church. If He wanted me to stay in Convention work there would be a great spiritual revival with many brought into the Kingdom and the church. If, on the other hand, He wanted me to go back into the pastorate He would let the meeting dry up.

Inside of ten days I received an invitation from a pastor in a nearby association for a revival, at a very early date. I hardly knew the pastor, but I looked at my engagement book and found that I had ten days free that I could give him. I wrote to him, and he accepted the date. In my mind I knew that this was my answer and my future work would soon be settled.

After the meeting began on Sunday night, I preached twice each day, morning and night. Although the congregations grew, it was still the driest, most uneventful meeting I had ever conducted — the only encouraging thing about it was that the crowds kept coming! Each day I prayed asking the Lord to reveal His will for my life and work, and in every service there was absolutely no response to any invitation I made. Saturday came, and the pastor had to admit he'd never seen a meeting like this. He said he'd seen the congregations lessen and the meeting dry up, but never had he seen the crowds increase and the meeting still dry up! I felt the same way, and said so.

Saturday morning the crowds were there — it was the same sort of dry meeting. Saturday night, a packed

house, but things seemed no different. I preached a simple, short sermon. But I had made every kind of invitation I knew, and so when I had finished my sermon I stepped to the edge of the stand, bowed my head and prayed quietly, "Oh Lord, I don't know what to do or say." And somehow as I said it, a burden for the whole godless world seemed to roll over my very soul — I saw in my mind the Negroes in Africa crying "send us the Gospel — we are dying without God!" The burden was so great I had to hold on to the pulpit stand. Then I prayed one more short prayer: "Oh Lord, if there is anyone in this house who has the burden I have, send them to this altar."

In less time than it takes to tell it, the whole church had gone to its knees, their faces as near to the front as they could get. I never before had heard as much confession of sin in all my life as I heard that night — all kinds of sins were confessed by leaders of the church as well as others.

When this happened the people sitting in the whole back section of that church fell on their knees, crying for mercy and salvation.

Twenty-eight people were saved in that service, and through Wednesday night over a hundred had made professions of faith! They even brought their money to me, saying that they had robbed God.

I praised God, for I had my answer. For eighteen more years I labored with the Lord in this great mountain territory trying to lay on the hearts of the people the command of the Lord as found in the Great Commission: "Go ye . . . and tell all nations."

† † † † †



State Missions Secretary, E. Lowell Spivey; Associate Secretary of Promotion, J. C. Pipes; and Secretary of Promotion, Earle L. Bradley.



J. C. Pipes with his famous "tree", leading a Preachers' School

CHAPTER 4: THE VISION ENLARGED

As my work with the North Carolina mountain Baptists continued, I found myself increasingly concerned with the shocking lack of understanding of church finance, a church budget, and especially mission giving through the Cooperative Program. Time and time again we worked through stewardship revivals to bring to the people of this area of the state an understanding of the needs of people other than themselves. It was a difficult task, sometimes humorous, sometimes rewarding, and always worthwhile.

I remember one experience with a church very well. It was during the Second World War, and this church needed a supply pastor. After receiving permission from Mr. Huggins, I began to supply for them two Sundays a month, on a regular basis.

After I had been supplying for a short time, I suggested that we have a week of stewardship studies. The church agreed, and a time was set aside for the period of study. When the time came, off and on during the week we had several deacons' meetings before the study session. At one such meeting I suggested that we work out a church budget. They didn't know what a church budget was. After I had gotten a blackboard and shown them, they agreed to it. Thereafter we met every night and worked on that budget.

According to them, the most the church had ever given in one year was \$1,300.00, so we worked out a budget of \$2,000.00. When we came to my salary, I left that up to them and they said that usually the pastor had been given sixty per cent of everything given. I refused a percentage, and then someone suggested \$75.00 a month, which I agreed to accept. I of course sent this money to the treasurer of the Convention, because the Convention was already paying my salary and I was only giving two Sunday mornings a month to the church, and there was very little pastoral work in the community.

When we finished the budget we had put in it something for the Cooperative Program, and something for

every object of the Convention besides! Although the deacons were certain the church couldn't raise that much money, I said there was no harm in trying; they agreed to recommend it if I would explain it in the morning worship service. That Sunday morning I spent an hour and a half explaining, and when the time was up they voted to try to do it. Thrilled over the outcome, I opened the doors for church membership and six adults came down the aisle asking that we get their letters from various other churches. Even more happy, I suggested that we sing a song and give the church an opportunity to come and welcome these new members. But when I turned to speak to them again myself, there were seven instead of six! I noticed the lady on the end of the line who had slipped forward to join the others, and when I asked if she wanted us to get her letter she said, "No, I've just been saved this morning and I want to accept Christ as my Saviour and be baptized!"

It was a revival, indeed! When we finally got away from the church at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon the people acted like they would have liked to stay on even longer.

However, the story does not end there. That church didn't raise \$2,000.00 that year, after all. They raised over \$3,000.00!! While the year before the gift to all mission objects had been about \$300.00, this year we sent more than \$1,300.00 — more than the whole budget the year before. And this did not even include the amount for my salary, which was also going to the Convention from me!

I figured that the increase in missions over the previous year, plus the \$75.00 a month they paid me which went on to the Convention lacked only \$300.00 of paying my whole salary, which at the time was \$2,200.00 a year.

When all was said and done, that church gave the highest percentage of all the churches in the association. During my two years with them they bought about three acres of land, started a parsonage, and when I left they called a pastor fulltime, built a \$9,000.00 parsonage, and supported him well. Shortly after, the church house burned down. After buying more land near by

they built an educational plant and when that was done they built the auditorium.

And so we saw stewardship working. I believe any church by faithful teaching of Bible stewardship can be led to do what this church did.

* * *

One day I received a letter from a country preacher with two churches and a combined salary of \$300.00 a year. He asked me to come for a week of stewardship revival to see if it would help, and of course I went. It concerned me even more that the year before they had not given one penny to any object of the Convention, not even the orphanage.

My sermons were on tithing, and I kept challenging the church to "try the Lord." There had not been a conversion for several years — there was nothing to convert to! But finally on Wednesday night a large number of farmers came down front and pledged to "try God" by tithing for one year. During the week I worked out a budget, putting the preacher's salary at \$900.00 per year and something in for all mission causes. The total budget when it was finished amounted to about \$1,800.00, and the church put on an every member canvass and underwrote it that week. I left the church at the end of that week happy, and later I knew that I had a right to be. A year afterward I had a letter saying that they had had a revival and baptized over a hundred converts — the church house, they said, wouldn't hold the crowds, and they were knocking out the sides and enlarging the building. I wrote them back that this was exactly what the Lord had said He would do in Malachi 3:10: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." God had literally done this for this church.!

Later they built a new church house costing around \$75,000.00, and called a fulltime pastor.

* * *

At the Biltmore Baptist Church in Asheville I held a stewardship study for a week. It started out badly, with poor weather on Monday night and only about twenty people present. But during the week the pastor said to me, "How would you deal with an atheist?"

I said, "I wouldn't agree with him. That's how."

"Well," he said, "there's one living next door and he'll be over soon for an argument. Everytime a new preacher comes around he does this."

"I won't argue with him," I promised; "in fact, I'll be glad to meet him."

And so the next evening he came. A college and seminary graduate, he had been a Methodist minister who had surrendered his pulpit and left the ministry.

He had done this, he vowed, because he was too honest to make his living off of humbuggery. "How could I go on making my living this way and still be honest with myself?" he wanted to know.

I said to him, "Do you know how 'lasses tastes?"
"Yes."

"Well, that's how I know God." I proceeded to tell him that when I was fourteen years of age He came into my heart and had never forsaken me all through the years. "Join us in our studies," I invited, assuring him that we weren't trying to cram anything down anybody's throat — we were simply trying to think God's thoughts after Him.

"I believe I'll join you," he said.

The next night he came with his wife. The last night he came again and sat in the very same place, and never uttered a word; but after we had dismissed he lingered until only the pastor and I were left. He came to the front and said to me, "Preacher, I've found the Lord in these meetings. I'm going back into the ministry."

He went to his bishop, telling him that he had found the Lord and asking for another charge. He said to him, "I may not have but one sermon to preach, but I'll preach it till I get another — and that is "I was blind, but now I see."

He was assigned a charge in Alabama, and as far as I know is still preaching.

Because she had heard me speak in an associational meeting, the president of the Woman's Missionary Union of a small church persuaded her fellow members to invite me to their church for a week of studies in stewardship and missions. Later I heard that on the Sunday when I was to begin that evening, at the morning service the pastor had announced my coming, then commented, "They tell me J. C. Pipes is coming for what he calls a stewardship revival. Now I don't know what this is, but I do know Pipes; he used to be a good preacher, but he's joined that bunch down in Raleigh now.

He went on, "Pipes conducted a revival for me once and we had a fine meeting, but that was before he went with the Convention. Come and hear him — I don't think he'll hurt you."

That night I began the meeting, preaching stewardship and missions. During the week we worked out a budget, putting in the Cooperative Program and an amount for each object supported by our state Convention. We also raised the pastor's salary \$10.00 a trip. Up until that time the church had given nothing to missions, but we had a good week and the budget was adopted on Sunday morning. When I left I felt that I had accomplished something for the Lord and His program of world missions.

The next month when the pastor came back for his regular Sunday he preached as usual — nothing was said about the stewardship meeting. After the service the treasurer counted out his salary and gave it to him. The pastor took it, counted it, and counted it again.

"Brother Treasurer, you gave me \$10.00 too much, he said.

"Oh," said the treasurer, "that's the result of our stewardship meeting. We raised your salary \$10.00 a trip."

"Well," said the pastor, "I believe I'll get that fellow in my other churches!"

Shortly after this, on the resignation of this pastor, the church called as pastor a young man, went half time with another church near by, and moved the man and his

family on the field. He soon led each church to become full time, and today both churches have a full time pastor living on the church field.

But back to the lady who had started it all. As superintendent of the Woman's Missionary Union in the association, she got in her car and drove all over the association contacting churches. It was through her efforts that I got into many of the churches with stewardship meetings, and in turn they taught me how to get into other churches in other associations.

Again I say, "God bless the Woman's Missionary Unions. They have helped much in extending the Gospel to the ends of the earth."

* * *

One of my most interesting experiences occurred in a small church in a small association.

A deacon stopped me saying, "Preacher, didn't one of our treasurers steal some of our Baptist money?"

"That's true," I admitted, "A large sum belonging to one of our denominational boards was stolen. But it was almost all replaced by insurance.

Then I told him, "We've had another steal in the last hundred years, also."

He hadn't heard about this one, so I asked him, "How much of your money did they get?"

He grinned and said, "None of mine."

"How much of your money did the bank in your town get?"

He grinned again. "It got all I had."

So I said, "Well, what are you grunting about? None of your money was stolen! You've refused to trust Baptist with your money, and yet you trusted the bank and they got all you had. I haven't heard you grumbling about the bank!

He said, "Preacher, you got me."

* * *

While I was working in a stewardship revival at the Craven Street Church in Asheville, my two sons asked me to go fishing with them. They were planning to go about 125 miles away to fish for trout, and I told them that if they would pick me up after I had spoken

at the church that night, I would go.

When we arrived it was about 3:00 o'clock in the morning, and so we slept in the car for awhile. Then, after making some coffee and eating our breakfast, we started off for the fishing territory. We were going to have to walk three miles up a rough creek to get to where the fish were, and being not as young as the boys, I gave out. I told them to go on and catch the fish — that I was going back to a little home we had seen and ask the lady for a room and bed so I could get some sleep and rest.

After they had gone on, I sat down on a log and began to think. This was the creek in which I had been baptized — I remembered the blueberries I had picked up on the hills around, and how God had found me and saved me by His grace. And not only had He saved me, but He had called me to be His co-laborer in trying to win the world to himself. I seemed to hear Him say, "Remember the rock from which you were hewn, and the hole of the pit from which you were digged." While I sat there God suddenly became overwhelmingly real to me, and I re-lived my conversion experience, and the words of Isaiah 55:12-13 sprang to my mind: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

And it seemed to me that that little brook broke forth into singing, and those old spruce pine trees clapped their hands. It was the gateway to heaven.

When I finally got up and walked back down to the little home, I found an aged lady and a young woman there, ironing. Because I had been so close to the Lord I had to tell them about my wonderful experience with Him on the mountain. But suddenly the young woman stopped me.

"I wish you'd shut up. I don't believe there is a God," she said, "I once did, but I learned it was all a

joke just like Santa Claus!"

I said, "Lady, you may not believe in God, but I know Him and have just had a meeting with Him."

I then went on with my story, and again she stopped me.

"Preacher, I want you to hush. I have a Christian husband in Ohio and I'm down here visiting my mother and living in sin, deceiving my husband, and I'm lost! What can I do about it?"

I told her to go to the woods, get on her knees, and confess all her sins and ask Jesus to forgive her and to come into her life. I quoted for her I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

After I had slept for about three hours, I got up to find that the young woman had written a letter to her husband while I slept, confessing her wayward life.

"Preacher," she said, "I have confessed my sins to God and He has forgiven me. I'm writing my husband all about it — I hope he will let me go back to him."

Two weeks later I was in Boone, and the pastor of the little church in the community where I had had this experience came to me and said, "Preacher, I baptized old Mose Triplet last Sunday!"

I said, "Raymond, how in the world did it happen?"

He answered, "You remember that young woman who was saved when you were there fishing? She surely got religion — she went down the highway telling everyone she met about it. She met old Mose in the road and had him on his knees, and he was converted right there. He came to the church, joined in on profession of faith in Christ, and I baptized him."

Old Mose was 95 years old, and I had known him as a boy and he was the most wicked man I ever knew. Years earlier I had gone to his home and tried to talk to him, and he had cursed me and said he wanted none of me or my God.

Two weeks after the talk with that pastor I was in Charlotte in a school of missions. On Monday morning I bought a paper and read, "Oldest Man in Wilkes County Buried Yesterday." It was Mose Triplet.

How wonderful God is! His mercy endures forever! I knew God sent me on that fishing trip to win that woman and that old man — may God be praised.

* * *

Another stewardship revival that lives in my memory was in a church in the Three Forks Association about ten miles from Boone, North Carolina. The first night a man was there who had walked about two miles down a mountain to be at the meeting.

Later he admitted to me, "I just came to see what the new preacher looked like and hear what he was talking about."

But he got interested, and he came off that mountain every night of the meeting. On Wednesday night some one stood up and announced that a truck would come around the next day to pick up produce for the Baptist orphanage. This man spoke up and said, "Tell them to come by my house; I want to send them young-uns some 'taters."

The next night before services started he came to me and asked if he could say something before I spoke. I gave him the opportunity, and this is what he said:

"Brothers and sisters, you know that twenty years ago you turned me out of this church for being drunk. I was drunk, and I guess I've been drunk a hundred times since. But this morning the Lord forgave me and I want you to forgive me and restore me to fellowship in this church."

Of course, the church was happy to restore him to full fellowship, and they promptly did so.

"Preacher," he asked, "will you let me tell how it happened?"

I said, "Sure! Go on."

Here is his story told us nearly as possible the way he told it that night:

"You remember I said last night for the truck to come by, that I wanted to give them young-uns some 'taters. Well, I decided to give them fifteen bushels. So I got my sacks and started down to the basement to sack them up. The devil went with me. I had three kinds of 'taters: No. #2, No.#1, and cut 'taters.

The devil said, 'Measure up them No. #2's. You can only get 40 cents a bushel for them.'

I said, 'Devil, I ain't gonna do it.'

He then set in on me to measure up them cut 'taters. He said, 'They'll rot on you. Send 'em on to the younguns and they'll eat them before they can rot.'

'Devil,' I said again, 'I ain't going to do it. I'm going to give them No. #1 'taters!'

When I said that, the Lord came into that basement, forgave me my sins, and we shouted all over that basement!"

That old man walked off that mountain and taught a Bible class in that church as long as he was able to go. Shortly before he went on to be with the Master I went to see him. He was an invalid, but he was praising the Lord and waiting happily to be called Home.

* * *

Another time I was asked to go to a small town church to speak on stewardship for a few days. I arrived on Sunday evening, with plans to stay in the home of the pastor.

I noticed that they didn't draw water from their own well, but were carrying their drinking and cooking water from across the street at the Methodist parsonage. I was informed that they had an old-fashioned well, and every time they drew up a bucket of water it had snails in it, Baptists were drinking Methodist water.

The Sunday evening meeting went ahead on schedule, but the chairman of the board of deacons was not present. He was a banker, and on Monday morning I went to visit him at his office. He informed me that he had gone to visit a friend in a nearby town on Sunday night. Furthermore, he didn't feel that his church needed the type of meeting that I was conducting. Nevertheless, he planned to attend that night, since he was the chairman of the board of deacons and felt that he couldn't afford not to come.

"We have a peaceful church and a good pastor," he said, "and we'd rather not be disturbed."

Later that morning the pastor and I went to the church house to look it over, and when I asked to go

into the basement to see his Sunday school rooms he said, "There's nothing down there but a mud hole."

We went down anyway and I said to him, "Why don't you finish this for your Sunday school? You have several classes meeting in the auditorium."

"I've tried several times," he told me, "but I have two wealthy deacons and they block it."

The chairman was one of the two.

That afternoon I went out to look over the surrounding community and visit some of the members. I saw their wonderful dairy barns, their well built hog pens, and their beautiful homes. The more I looked, the more my spirit burned within me. By service time both barrels of my gun were loaded — I meant to pull the trigger and let them have it that night. I might get run off, but at least they would know, in the words of Ezekial, "that a prophet of God had been among them."

When we got to the church that night those two deacons were there, sitting on the front row. I stood down on the floor in front of them.

"Brother deacon," I said, "You told me you have a peaceful church, a good preacher, and you don't want to be disturbed. But you know, I read in my Bible, 'woe unto them that are at ease in Zion.' "

I then proceeded to tell that congregation of my visit through the community, seeing all those wonderful homes, stock barns, and hog pens. Then I called attention to the basement of their church and the need for Sunday school space. I told them I had read a story that illustrated their case:

"Way back in the mountains, John and Mary got married, and sometime later a little baby was born. One cold night the baby got sick, and Mary awoke John and asked him to get up and build a fire and help doctor the baby. John grunted and went back to sleep. Mary got up, built the fire herself, and doctored the baby. About the time she got back in bed a pig squealed in the barn and John jumped out of bed, dressed, and went out to look after the pig. Later he came back and crawled into bed, almost frozen.

'John,' Mary said, 'I tried to get you up to help

doctor this baby and you wouldn't. Yet you went out in the cold to look after a pig. Do you know why you did that?"

John said, 'No.'

'I can tell you,' his wife declared. 'That pig has a thoroughbred daddy and this baby has a scrub.' "

"That's the secret of these wonderful barns and pig pens: your stock has thoroughbred daddies, and these children have scrubs! If it weren't that way you would have provided a place to teach them the Word of God!"

Those two deacons didn't miss another service that week, and one of them even took me to a clothing store in town and clothed me from head to foot. The chairman came to me after the last service, asked me to take out my date book, and put his church down in it my first open date.

"I want you to come back, stand down on the floor, and tell us more about what God wants me and this church to do," he said.

About six months later I went back for another week as we had planned, and on Monday that chairman asked me to come to the bank. When I got there, he wanted me to go with him and the pastor to look over the church house. We did, and in those six months they had finished the basement and put in it several nice classrooms.

Later I asked the pastor how he had done it, and he told me that the two wealthy deacons had led in it, and it had been done with no trouble.

But one thing still bothered me — the pastor still lived in the snail house!

On Thursday afternoon the banker deacon asked me to come to the bank and talk to him. When I went, he asked if he might have a few minutes of the service that night. Of course I gave my consent.

That evening he told the church that he had bought a parsonage that day and he would like to sell it to the church — but if they didn't want to buy it he would give it to them. However, the church voted to buy the property.

In one of the services that week I told them that I believed the Lord had sent me there for the same reason

that he sent Socrates to the Athenians: "to sting them out of their complacency."

* * *

A short time later I was in Oxford in a deacons' school, and I told this experience. Several years afterward, I went back to Oxford for a school of missions, and while I was there a deacon came to me and said he wanted to take me out to his church.

We went to a large country church and he showed me a spacious educational plant they had just finished. "Preacher," he said, "there is your 'pig story'; we heard you tell it in the deacons' school, came home, got busy, and there is the result."

* * *

One year I was asked to hold a revival in a small church in Wilkes County. Knowing that this church had never had a Vacation Bible School, I agreed to go on one condition: that they let me bring Mrs. Pipes and conduct a Bible school. The church voted to let me do it, and in the letter they wrote they said, "If you have to have one of them things (meaning the Bible school), come on." We went.

I preached twice a day, and Mrs. Pipes worked in the Bible school. I preached for two weeks, and we had a two weeks' school. At the close of both, we had twenty-four people to baptize, and all but one came through the Bible school. Immediately the church voted to have one the following year.

And so the following year we went back and conducted the same type of meeting with about the same results. But this year, among those who were converted was a seventeen-year-old girl, one of the most brilliant students in the high school, who would finish the following year. As I talked with her, I learned that she wanted badly to go to college, although she felt that it would be impossible. A member of a large family, she said there was no money available for her to attend college.

Because we were so impressed with her, Mrs. Pipes and I decided to pray and work to see if some way couldn't be worked out for her to attend a Baptist college. I made a trip to Gardner Webb College, and talked to

President Elliott about the girl. He told me that if I could raise \$400.00 he would see that she was allowed to go to school there.

My first thought was of Dr. Ward Barr, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Gastonia, North Carolina. He had helped me before with other problems, and when I broached the subject he said he would be responsible for \$300.00 of the necessary \$400.00. I only needed \$100.00!

During that year — the girl's last year in high school — I was in Fairmont at a deacons' school, and when I told about this girl at one of the meetings, one of the deacons came to me at the close of the meeting. He might give me the other \$100.00 if I didn't get it elsewhere. "Come to me later in the year," he said.

That summer while I was in a revival at an Indian church in Pembroke, I told my wife one morning that I was going to Fairmont. She agreed to ride with me, and as we rode she asked me the reason for the trip.

I said, "I'm going down there to get \$100.00 to finish out the amount needed for that girl to go to Gardner Webb College."

"Daddy," she said, "I'd never go down there begging money!"

But we kept going, and when we got there I told the pastor, Brother Carey Herring, what I had come for. He agreed to accompany us, and we looked for him in various places, ending up on his farm. When we got there he was gone, but we sat down and waited. Later when he came in he saw me and said, "What are you doing down here?"

"I came down to get a hundred dollars."

"From whom?" he asked.

"From you," I said. I informed him that I never forgot when a man indicated the possibility of getting money. And I reminded him of what he had said at the deacons' school.

He sat down beside me and said, "Tell me that story again."

I did.

Then he said, "Let's go back to the desk."

We went gladly. I was getting closer.

He got out his checkbook, wrote a check to Gardner Webb College for \$100.00, and then wrote me one for \$25.00.

I said, "What's that for?"

He said, "That's for you for asking me for the \$100.00.

As we drove back I showed Mrs. Pipes the checks.

"What's the \$25.00 for?" she wanted to know.

"He gave me that for asking him for the \$100.00," I replied.

"Heavens alive, I never heard of a man paying a man to beg him for money!" she said.

I sent the money to President Elliott and the girl went to college.

* * *

During one of my earliest stewardship revivals, I was working at Yates Memorial Baptist Church just out of Durham. As was usual, I presented all the objects of our Convention, and one night I presented our Baptist colleges. I spoke of the need of many students who were struggling to get an education, or of some young people who wanted to go to college but were financially unable. I told about a boy trying to work his way through Mars Hill, and about a girl from Cherokee County who wasn't able to go to college at all.

At the close of the week I was presented a check for \$200.00. It seemed that a big-hearted church member had put this amount in the church treasury to be divided between the boy and girl I had mentioned. (That was in 1937, and \$200.00 meant a lot more than it does now).

I brought the check to Mrs. Moore at Mars Hill, and asked for a receipt for the boy and girl. I also asked her to write the girl that a friend had put \$100.00 there for her so that she might come to college, and if she indicated that she didn't want it it was to be given to another worthy student. I carried the boy's receipt to him.

I found him in the basement of the Mars Hill Church, cleaning the furnace. He had soot all over him — his face was so black that I hardly recognized him. When

I gave him the receipt, it was worth a thousand dollars just to see the look in his eyes.

Today that boy is a leading electronics man at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. With two children in the University of Tennessee, he is a devoted Christian carrying on for the Lord. The girl graduated from Mars Hill, then graduated from a state teachers' college, and today is a public school teacher and a faithful member of her church. The man who helped them has gone on to his reward.

But there are other instances — many of them — of men with big hearts giving money to help students go to college. One good brother of Jarrett Springs gave \$800.00 to help send one girl to Wake Forest and another to Mars Hill. Both have now gone out to bless the world.

Other men have given me money to help pastors back in little mountain churches struggling to carry on for the Lord. Most of those who helped have now gone to reap their own reward.

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

† † † † †

PART III: THE VISION SHARED

CHAPTER 1

SERMONS FROM THE STOREHOUSE

This is the greatest stewardship sermon I have ever read. It was preached by the Lord Jesus. I have preached it hundreds of times. I have herewith outlined it. It is from Luke 16.

- I. JESUS TELLS A STORY - we call it a parable.
 - A. There was a rich man who had an unfaithful steward.
 - B. The steward, found unfaithful, became frightened about his job.
 - C. He sought a solution — and found it by leading others to be dishonest.
- II. JESUS' SERMON TO THE DISCIPLES AND TO US
 - A. You cannot take your money with you, but you can send it ahead of you.
 - B. Investing money in the kingdom of heaven is banking in heaven — “All you can hold in your cold dead hand is what you have given away.” See Matthew 16:19-20.
 - C. Reaction to Jesus' sermon by the Pharisees — Luke 16:14-15.
- III. JESUS CLOSES WITH AN ILLUSTRATION — Lazarus and the Rich Man

I want to close this outline with a story out of my own experience. I sent my youngest son to the Warren Wilson College for his last two years of high school. One day my older son told me he was going to have this younger brother home for dinner and invited me also. When I got there he had gone for the younger brother, and when they arrived there was another boy with them. It was a cold day, and I noticed that he had on my son's shirt, but no sweater. Taking my son aside, I questioned him about this and he said, “Daddy, he's my roommate, and he has no parents and no clothes. So

I let him have my shirt.”

When they started back I asked this boy to meet me at a clothing store the next Saturday, and he said he would. When Saturday came I took him to a clerk in the store and gave instructions to clothe the boy from his feet up with warm clothes and charge them to me.

When the boy came out with the clothes on his face looked like the face of an angel. From then on every time he saw me he would throw up his hand and call “Hello; Mr. Pipes!”

That young boy went out to war and gave his all so that I could have the privilege of preaching this sermon. I know that when I get to heaven I shall hear again that happy voice saying, “Hello, Mr. Pipes!” I’m not bragging, but how glad I am that I had sense enough to invest a little money to make a friend for eternity. This is true with all that we invest in eternal souls for Jesus Christ.

TRYING GOD

Scripture References: Romans 12:2 and Malachi 3:10

Introduction: In these verses one word is the same: the word prove. But I would like to substitute another word for this, and that word is experience. See how well it goes in Romans: “. . . that ye may experience what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” and again in Malachi: “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and experience me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

I. HAVE WE EVER TRIED GOD IN FAITH?

- A. Abraham tried God and wrote across the mountain Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will provide.
- B. Noah by faith tried God, built an ark, and thereby condemned the world and became the heir of

righteousness.

C. By faith Moses led the multitudes out of bondage to the Promised Land.

Have we tried God in faith and experienced his promises?

II. HAVE WE EVER TRIED GOD IN TRUST?

A. In Isaiah 40:31 we read: "But they that wait (trust) upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

B. This can be illustrated from my own experience:

One time during a revival a very dear friend was unsaved. Many times previously I had talked to him, but to no avail. He always told me he was as good as the church members. I had continued to pray for him, and one night during the revival I called him by name, saying that time is bringing us nearer to eternity, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God unprepared to meet Him. Looking up at me he said, "Preacher, tell me how to pray and how to be saved." I tried, but my words were too weak to help him. That night he went home and walked the floor all night begging his wife to tell him how to be saved.

The next day I went out into the woods, got on my knees, and told God my problem. Quickly came the answer, from Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

That night I preached on that text to the congregation, but especially to my friend, and he found the way to peace and forgiveness. Several years later as he was near death I visited him. When I asked how it was with him, he said, "Preacher, I've been successful in business all my life; but the greatest transaction I ever made was on that night in that little church when I made a deal with God for time and eternity."

III. HAVE YOU EVER TRIED GOD IN GIVING?

- A. Have you been investing in the bank of heaven?
- B. God never breaks a promise. This also I can say from a personal experience:

In 1926, when I had my nervous breakdown and went to Morganton to the hospital, I had \$350.00 in the bank. For five weeks in that hospital my mind was a blank. When I came to myself I asked if I had to pay them then, and they said I did. I told them I didn't know where it would come from. They told me I was paid two weeks in advance. For my hospitalization of thirteen weeks my bill was more than \$500.00; but when I left it was all paid and I had nearly \$700.00 in the bank. I told my wife that if I had stayed sick she would have gotten rich. You ask me where it came from? I can only say, "God never breaks a promise."

MAKING PATHS

Scripture Reference: Hebrews 12:12-13

Introduction: In Hebrews 12:1-11 we are taught that Christians may expect chastisement for our sins. God cleanses those whom he loves. While no chastisement is pleasant at the time, it yields the fruits of righteousness.

In verses 12 and 13 we are told to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for our feet lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. When I read these two verses, well do I remember how my father used to take me out to the old apple tree. When he was through with me I always walked away with my hands hanging down, and my knees sagging. This is truly a picture of verse 13 — my father did this because he loved me, and he wanted me to grow up and do something with my life.

Our admonition today is to lift up the hands that hang down. Make straight paths for your feet. Go some-

where! Make paths! Now let us answer the questions:
How and for what purpose?

I. IF I AM TO MAKE A PATH I MUST MAKE AN IMPRESSION.

A. When I am gone from this earth will anyone know I have lived? Will I be missed?

B. Is this world a little better than when I came into it?

II. TO MAKE A PATH YOU MUST GO SOMEWHERE.

A. No one can make a path standing still.

B. So many Christians are still babes in Christ. Hebrews 5:12-13. A preacher once said to me, "Pipes, I never could preach, but I am the best hand in the world to keep the saints from fighting." I said, "Oh, yes, you are a spiritual baby-sitter." Too many of us are baby sitters instead of trail blazers.

III. WE ARE TO MAKE STRAIGHT PATHS. Matthew 7:14

A. Are we taking too many detours?

B. Where are we on Sunday morning? On the golf course? The lake?

C. How can we make our path straight? Herewith another personal experience:

I remember as a boy on the farm seeing my father lay off a corn row in a long field. It would be so straight that you could shoot a rifle at one end of the row and it would go out at the other end. When I asked how he was able to do this, he showed me. He sent me to the far end of the row and had me put a long stick with white paper tied around the top into the ground. Then he would start the mule toward that stick, never taking his eyes off the stick. At first I wondered why he didn't look at the ground near him instead of at the stick — but when he got to the end of the row it was perfectly straight.

If you and I want our paths straight we must keep our eyes upon Jesus, look straight into his face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His wonderful grace. Jesus said, "I am the light of the

world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

IV. THE PURPOSE OF A GODLY PATH

- A. We walk the godly path not only to get to heaven ourselves, but to help others get there as well.
 - 1. Someone is following in the path we have made.
 - 2. I might be able to take a drink of whiskey and it not hurt me, but would it hurt that one following me?
- B. One of the saddest expressions in the Bible is the heart-broken cry of David: “O Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee.”

Our Stewardship

The supreme and continuing hunger of God is for fellowship with man. For this, man was created in the image and likeness of God and this was lost when man sinned. Fellowship was broken, not on God's part, but on man's part. God did not forsake man, man forsook God. Before this break God walked and talked with man in holy fellowship and comradeship in the garden prepared by God for man's habitation. This was divine worship, self-giving, mutual; God gave himself to man, and man gave himself to God. Sin entered, broke this holy fellowship, and destroyed worship.

OUR SALVATION GOD'S TASK

This brings us to the supreme task deep in the heart of God, the salvation of his lost sons and daughters. This task is the divine objective for which God released all the energy manifested in the life, the humiliation, the suffering, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus our Lord. It was for this supreme objective that Jesus suffered, bled, and died on Calvary. It was and is this that still drives him on, tireless and persistent, seeking till every lost sheep shall be brought back to the fold of God.

Salvation is fellowship with God; it is true worship, the giving of each to the other, a divine sharing of each

with the other. Someone has defined worship as spiritual commerce. This is what took place in Jesus. God became man and man became God; the Word became flesh; the Word was God. Whenever fellowship ceases, true worship ceases, salvation becomes static, stagnant, dead. Salvation becomes theological, not experiential and therefore powerless to affect and change life, either the life of the possessor or the lives of others. In this condition we cease to be new creatures experientially. We become old, stale, stagnant; the world rots; the salt has lost its savor and it is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of man. Jesus asked the question, "Wherewith shall it be salted?" It can be salted. He who made the salt, he can bring back the savor even into saltless salt.

SALVATION THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

The salvation of lost men must more and more become the supreme overshadowing mission of the church. "As Thou didst send me into the world, even so send I them into the world," said Jesus. This must become an obsession with us. The business of the church, says Dr. Walter N. Johnson, is not to conduct war, but to conduct worship (salvation). The business of the church is not to kill and bury, but to cure and make alive dead souls through the power of Christ. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." This is the word of the Master given to us. This lays on the church its one supreme task. We believe it is the purpose of God to save the whole creation, but the creation can be saved only as man, the supreme object of God's love, is brought back into oneness with the Father. This is atonement. God's complete redemption can never be consummated until man, the central figure, returns home to the fold of God and then with him he will bring all he possesses into this salvation. This Zacchaeus did.

God's preparation for this divine task of his church has been made. God set himself to the task, first in giving Jesus to be the propitiation through whom all the

world of lost men might find reconciliation and a meeting place in him. He gathered about him his apostles and for about three years ate with them, walked with them, slept with them, taught them until many of them could say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Then he was crucified before their very eyes, was buried and arose. Surely this was enough. No, this was and is not enough. It was not enough for them, said he. They must tarry until endued with power from on high. There must come into their hearts the one supreme dynamic that can never fail. They must be obsessed with the same mind, the same heart, the same love that drove him through inward compulsion of the Spirit to become the slave of God, to pour out his soul unto death, to be numbered with the transgressors for the love of lost men and women.

Said the Apostle Paul, "Let this same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." The all consuming passion of the heart of God must become the all consuming passion of the heart of the church. This is the mystery of Pentecost. This is what will happen if we wait before him on our knees. This passion of love comes from God through the Holy Spirit; I know not how, but I do know it will never fail. There can be and there must be born in our souls this divine compassion that will drive us to limitless ends and make us count all things to be lost for the priceless privilege of sharing with him in his quest for this priceless being, a human soul.

Without this compassion all our preaching becomes sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. All the gift of prophecy and all the mysteries we may understand and all the knowledge we possess and all the power we may have to remove mountains will become naught. And if we give all our goods to feed the poor and our bodies to be burned, all will be failure without this burning passion for dying humanity.

This is the gripping and growing conviction of my life. We must, if we are to live and serve him who died for us, dare to go deeper, dare to wait before him in prayer and supplication until there arises afresh in our

breasts this passion that will send us out to live for him, to serve for him, to suffer for him, to die with him if need be. The early Christians and many others across the centuries have had this passion. Our possession of it will imprint upon every act of service and upon every dollar given to God's kingdom the image of the suffering, dying, bleeding face of him who came to bring us to God. May God help us to wait before him until we are endued with power from on high. Then we shall go forth and become his witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

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TRUE WORSHIP

(This message has been given hundreds of times in churches, preachers' schools, deacons' schools, and even to individuals. It is a composite study in worship through giving. Ed. Note.)

ELEMENTS IN WORSHIP	PRE- BIBLE	LAW	GOSPEL
THINK	Elements of warship in Pre-Bible days	Gad's ownership is incorporated and asserted in writings of Moses.	The Super-Law or the Christian way in all Christian living and giving.
FEEL	1. Cain and Abel Gen. 4:3-4	1. The tithe peculiarly claimed by Jehovah as a manifestation of His ownership of all. Leviticus 27:30	1. Matt. 5:17-20 2. Matt. 23:1-3 3. Rom. 8:1-4
SAY	2. Old Testament opens with offerings in warship. Likewise the New. Matt. 2:11	2. Results of bringing offerings in warship II Chron. 29:27, II Chron. 31:10	The Law not annulled but to be fulfilled in us who are under the Spirit of Grace.
DO	3. Abraham, the first recorded tither Gen. 14:20 4. Jacob the second recorder tither. Gen. 28:10-22	3. Use of tithes brought in warship. Num. 18:20-26 4. Cause of sad plight of temple warship in Nehemiah's day. Nehemiah 13:4-10 5. Cause of degeneration of true warship in Malachi's day. Malachi 1:11-14 6. The way of restoration and blessing. Malachi 3:7-12 7. Gad's Universal Challenge: "TRY ME".	4. Heb. 7:8 In Old Testament men paid tithes to men who die; now we pay tithes to Him who lives FOREVER.

THE LAW WAS MADE FOR MAN, NOT MAN FOR THE LAW. YOU CANNOT BREAK GOD'S LAW, NOT EVEN THE PRINCIPLE OF THE TITHE, BUT YOU MAY BREAK YOURSELF AGAINST GOD'S LAW.

CHAPTER 2: THE VISION STRENGTHENED

Note: Originally written in the form of a letter to M. A. Huggins, the following chapter next appeared as the booklet, "Life and Reality in the Shadow of Death." Feeling as we do that it represents J. C. Pipes in a unique way, we present it again here. It was written following the passing of Nora Pipes, his wife of twenty-one years.

There are yet, at times, some tears in my eyes! I would not have it otherwise, but there is a new light and joy in my heart. I have come to know Jesus in a new way. I believe I have never had such a vital and glorious experience as I have had these last few days.

The first two days were dark, oh, so dark! To me the first day was Gethsemane and Calvary. The second day was the day of darkness when I could not see His face. It must have been comparable with the day that Jesus lay in the tomb. But then Saturday morning was Easter not only in tradition but in vital experience. The text of the first day was that experience as He wept with Martha and Mary.

I heard Him say, "I come to weep with you," and surely there is something that I caught from that experience that made me able to appreciate and love Him more deeply than I had ever before. The second day the message was not from the Bible, but from an old song: "When through the deep waters I call thee to go, the sorrows of death shall not thee overflow, for I WILL BE WITH THEE thy troubles to bless and sanctify to thee, thy deepest distress." I said to Him: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." I was more conscious of His presence than I was of you though my heart was bleeding while we sat there in the hotel. I am so glad it was so.

The third morning, Saturday, I awoke at four-thirty. A sermon outline on my work in His kingdom was the

first thing that came to me. It was on shepherds seeking a saviour, and rejoicing, and telling; and then on wise men seeking a Lord or King and opening their treasures; and one of those treasures that they presented to Him was perfume for the burial. I got up and wrote the outline first for I felt that I had come face to face with HIM not only as Saviour but also as Lord and King, and that now I was being called upon to make the supreme offering of my life, an offering completed that morning as I was to stand by the grave and commit to the earth the most precious of all treasures that he had ever committed to me. I was happy to bring to His blessed feet my dearest treasure and gladly and joyfully present to him the blood from my very heart.

After I had written the outline another text came before it was yet light and a voice said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead. He is not here, but is risen." I became conscious of a holy presence in my little room. And in that presence, somehow, Nora stood there more real and closer to me than she had ever before. I heard a voice, (not with my ears, but deeper than my sense of hearing; for if I had heard it with my ears I should have been sure it was delusion,) which said, "I did not come to rob you, but I came to answer both your and her prayers, that she could go with you across those hills to carry MY message. I could not answer your prayers in the way you thought, for the children needed her; but as you have given her to Me I have come to give her back to you alive from the dead. She will be with you on every trip, and she also will be so near your children that should the tempter come, she can whisper and touch and they will hear." The sun arose on that Easter morning in Reality. I lost all desire to see the body for I was so conscious of her joyful presence that there was no attraction in the body. As the day went on, it grew brighter and brighter, and the sun shone more gloriously than it had ever shined to me before.

It was now time to go to the church where the body lay in state. We went and Lena (a daughter) walked by my side. It did not seem to me like a funeral. I could not feel myself fitting into a funeral. We took our seats

with the rest of the family, and as I lifted my eyes to that bank of flowers a heavenly light enveloped them, and I caught Lena by the arm and said: "Oh, Lena, this is heaven."

At that very moment I knew I must stand up that day before that group and bear testimony to the eternal, and that, for me, death, the last enemy, was destroyed. Lena was afraid for me, but I told her not to fear for I was in the hands of Him who was able to sustain, and that He would glorify Himself, (reveal Himself), in keeping power. I sent for Pastor Covert and told him that when all had been spoken I wanted to give a few words of testimony. This privilege was granted me. Those few minutes were the most glorious of my life for His sake. All the while I was absolutely indifferent to the idea that Nora was in the casket. When the funeral service at Weaverville was over, I did not have any sense of a funeral but it seemed to me I was living in a new world. I did not want sympathy, but I wanted everyone to share with me in the realm of a new world, in which death had been annihilated.

We left the Weaverville church for the Gabriel's Creek cemetery where her body was to rest in its mother earth. During the drive all the way I was riding in a glorious chariot propelled by the power of the eternal which was created for His glory. Everything became sacred. As we made the trip, I became conscious that God wanted Lewis, my son, to bear a testimony. I wondered if I should mention it to him. The spirit said, "No, I will direct you."

At the little church were gathered her own people according to the flesh. Many of them were old. I asked that the body be carried into the little church where she had found the Lord when a young girl, and where she had been baptized in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I asked Brother Sprinkle to sing "How Firm a Foundation," and I asked Brother Covert to sing "Jerusalem the Golden." Dr. R. L. Moore then led in prayer. Then still in His hand I took charge of the direction of the service. Still conscious of His guidance I asked the undertaker to open the casket so

I could see right into her face as I stood by her casket. Under His blessed direction and with all freedom and composure I bore testimony to the eternal Presence and the consciousness and certainty of Easter, not alone traditionally, but more blessedly mine now and forever more.

When I finished, I just turned and asked Lewis if he wished to speak. Without hesitation he arose to make the first public talk of his life. I shall not describe that testimony which lasted about seven minutes. As we came back he told me that all the time he knew I was going to ask him, and that he was happy to have the privilege of speaking out of his heart that which had become more real to him than life.

All that evening there was no sorrow. I stood by the grave and watched the grave fill without a tear, with no sense that "Mother" was being buried. We covered the grave with hundreds of bright flowers, the loving gifts of numerous friends and churches, and set the monument. Then this thought came to me: How happy I am to be able to place in a beautiful casket, and cover this mound with flowers to the honor of God, my own Father, who could take less than \$2.00 worth of material and build a machine that for 49 years could carry on; and for 21 years could carry burdens, cook bread, iron shirts, and press clothes for a country preacher that he might go out over valley and hill to carry the message that, if accepted, and incarnated, would transform all the earth into Heaven and would make men into the image of the Eternal. What a blessed Experience!

Monday I awoke at four o'clock in the morning and sat with Him and her in a blessed fellowship for almost two hours before the rest of the family arose. As the day progressed the light shone brighter and brighter. I went to town. I started early, but it was almost noon before I got there. Everywhere I stopped men had sensed the presence of the Eternal and bore testimony to the blessedness of what they had given away. Today I am still in His blessed presence. Still I cannot sense that Nora is in the cemetery. Somehow I am conscious that Jesus has taken that which was dearest to me and

has made her one with Himself. Here is what, it seems to me, I am sensing in this conscious vital reality. This companion in labor, love, and service who has walked with me across these twenty-one years keeps coming to me. But her existence on the physical level seems to fade and I am left in the presence of Jesus only. I can now begin to understand that expression which closes the account of the transfiguration experience in Luke 9:28-36. The disciples were for a moment conscious of the presence of Moses and Elijah. "And when the voice came, Jesus was found alone."

Then also it seems that she is coming to me not in the relationship of husband and wife from the standpoint of earthly relationship, but in a more blessed relationship of having been a co-laborer with me in the eternal purpose and plan of God; I shall know her no more in the same relationship that I knew her here but in a more holy and more blessed and eternal fellowship with him which will be so far beyond our joyful companionship here in service that now my poor finite mind cannot conceive of it.

Again another vision came over my heart as I came from Winston-Salem to Asheville, on my way home with her body. It came almost simultaneously with the sense of His presence weeping with me, related earlier in this paper. It seemed there arose before my view earth's multiplied millions, sick in body and mind and spirit, as I was; yet they knew no blessed One to whom they could come who is weeping with them. They were sitting alone in the shadow of death without any one to share their grief or to comfort them. This vision brought to me a new incentive, which remains to this hour, to dedicate more deeply all my energies to God in communicating to all these lonely desolate groups the fellowship that was now consciously mine as the One above every one sat with me and wept with me. And now as I go on, this desire increases; and it seems that the experience of Paul in II Corinthians 14 has been and is still increasingly my experience. This love picks me up and pushes me on. To this end, I dedicate myself by his grace, till he calls me to Himself, at the close of the day.

CHAPTER 3: WHAT CAN I ADD?

By Ruth S. Pipes

For over twenty years now we have walked together. Many times through these years my inadequacy has been too great for me, but always the Lord has shown me the way through to the other side. It is certainly true that I have learned many things and had many wonderful opportunities that would not have come had I not entered into my union with James Carter Pipes. I have always tried to ask — and answer — the question in my marriage, “What can I add??” instead of “What can I receive?” In trying to do this I have received an immeasurable blessing as together we continue to seek God’s leadership in our lives.

At first, as we discussed marriage, the thought of being a preacher’s wife frightened me. Then, too, we both had responsibilities. I had my widowed mother and my niece, and he had his children. And so, even though we had great respect and love for each other, we both prayed that the Lord would close the doors for us if this marriage could not be good in His great wisdom. But the doors seemed to open wider and wider, and so in spite of the difficulties and responsibilities, we entered into marriage together.

As I already knew, life with James Carter also meant life with a ready-made family. I didn’t expect them to accept me as a mother, and I asked that they call me Ruth. To this day I am grateful for all of them, their consideration, and their respect.

I am sure it was hard for them, as it sometimes was for me. I remember one especially difficult time when Daddy came to me and said, “Come with me. I’m going way back in the country. We’ll make my appointment and stay somewhere.” And it was “way back,” too, but I shall never forget the experience.

Inside, I was suffering death. It seemed to me I had made a mess of things and there was no way out. I was not even conscious of what was going on around me in

that little church until a rough mountaineer went to the front and in a tremendous bass voice sang "Victory in Jesus."

Well, he sang it just for me that day. The victory that I received sitting there in that little one-room church was one of those tremendous experiences that only Jesus can give.

"What if you hadn't come?" Daddy asked. He always seemed to know what I needed at just the right time. I began to understand that day that when so many unanswered problems come, it might be that God is saying, "I want some fellowship with you; you are neglecting me."

Another problem that I had to learn to overcome was worry. All my life I had been a natural worrier. I would even worry after something had happened, about whether it had been my fault, and what I might have done to make things turn out differently.

After our marriage I worried about what I would do when I became older and might not find a job. Over and over James Carter would say, "Trust the Lord, accept the things that are inevitable, and stop worrying." It took a long time, but I have finally learned to do this. In fact, I have become such a non-worrier that one day he said, "When you stopped, you stopped, didn't you?"

One of the great privileges that has come to me since our marriage is that of listening to the great teachers as they taught the Bible. So often there would be a meeting, and I would say, "I mustn't attend this meeting. It's just for preachers." And James Carter would reply, "That's all right. You're my wife, and I'm glad for you to go." In this way we have enjoyed studying the Bible together. Daddy always wanted me to meet and hear the great saints of God that he had come to know. There were many of them along the way. I could have never had this experience apart from our marriage.

Of course his work involved a great deal of travel, and when he had had a great week away he always seemed anxious to get home and go over the good things he had learned with me. In fact, most of our married years have been spent with his comings and goings. While it was lonely this way, we always looked forward to the

times when he would return home for a day or two. Some of the time I went with him, and these weeks brought me acquaintances that have become lifelong friends.

Another privilege as the wife of J.C. Pipes was that of constant and continuous "open house" for preachers. At first it was hard for me to accept all the preachers' requests to come to our house anytime, but now I know I would have missed so much if it had not been this way.

Our dear friend, J. R. Moseley, accepted our home as his when he came to Asheville. When he planned to come, he would write a card and tell us when to meet him. These times with him proved to be some of the highlights of our lives.

For one thing, I became interested in the value of foods as a result of his great knowledge of food. He would always share with me any new insight into food values he had learned. And then when he came we would always have little group meetings in our home, so that others could share this wonderful experience.

What a joy our own little daughter brought to our union. She was such a good traveler, and thoroughly enjoyed going places with her daddy. He was always so patient to show her what this or that letter was, or to tell her what town we were entering. I remember once in a small hotel in West Jefferson he became provoked with her.

"Lynda," he said quite sternly, "if you don't behave yourself I will take off my belt to you."

Lynda thought a second and replied, "Yes, and your pants will fall off, too." With that he dismissed the whole thing with a laugh.

Although we didn't always see things alike, we agreed that we would cooperate in the discipline of the little ones. I say little ones because we had Libby for three-and-a-half years. One week-end Daddy came home and told me about a new plan at the Orphanage to let homes take children as foster children. We talked and prayed about it, and finally decided to ask for a little girl. When we consulted Lynda, she requested that we get her a twin; and so we applied for a girl as near her age as possible.

After all the necessary examinations had been gone through, we waited about a year before they came to tell us they had two little girls — one that we might be able to keep, and one we probably would not. After considering everything and seeking to make the best decision for all concerned, we made our choice without ever seeing either girl. We decided to ask for the girl who might be able to be ours for good.

Even from the moment that we went for her, Libby seemed to accept us, and we loved her very much. The two girls really enjoyed trying to be twins. In fact, someone once asked them if they were twins, and Lynda said, "As soon as we get all our clothes made alike we will be."

The years flew in our happy home, and to our disappointment the day came when we had to give Libby up. On her last day with us Libby was in a music recital, and she planned to sing "It Is No Secret." I didn't think I could take it, but I wouldn't have denied her the privilege of singing it. Daddy forsook me that day — I have always believed that he just couldn't stand it, or else he would have excused himself from his work that one day.

The room was filled, the teacher was playing the accompaniment, and Libby was singing the song with all her heart and looking right at me. When she came to the words, "There is no night, for in His light you'll never walk alone," it was too much — she broke down, ran, and climbed up in my lap and we both cried with all our hearts. Even today we cannot hear that lovely song without feeling this experience very deeply again.

But happily that was not the end of our wonderful relationship with Libby. Every summer except one we had the joy of having her for awhile, until she was married. When her husband went overseas we got a letter one day asking, "Can I come home while Frank is overseas?" Of course the answer was "yes." We are so grateful for Libby, her husband Frank and their daughter Shannon Ruth, and especially for their dedication to the Lord.

We are grateful for our own daughter, now a nurse.

Always impressed that she was to be a nurse, Lynda never wavered from her calling to this type of ministry. Even after being turned down by her first choice of a nursing school, she continued to look until she found another that was very good and acceptable to her.

Now that the children are all gone, James Carter and I still find our lives busy and full. We are both employed by the Buncombe Association, he as representative at Memorial Mission Hospital in Asheville, and I in the associational office.

When we were married, I didn't even know what an association was. I well remember that he would bring home work to be done, and so I became his secretary. It was with the training thus gleaned over the years that I was offered the work in the Buncombe Association. Over eight years ago now, I was called about taking the job, and I immediately said "No," knowing that Daddy had never wanted me to work outside the home.

"Why did you say no?" he wanted to know when I had hung up the phone.

Surprised that he would even want me to consider it, I said, "Well, it's too late now. I've already refused it."

I thought little more about it until a day or so later when another call came saying that they were coming to see me about the job. Somehow this time I knew that I must take it — that it was not of my choosing, but something that the Lord was working out for us.

And so for eight years I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all the wonderful people in the churches of the Buncombe Association. How little did I know when I worried about my future work and did Daddy's secretarial chores that I was preparing for this service in the Kingdom.

And so these past twenty years have been wonderful years, as we have walked together. There have been trials and problems, but through them all we have gained strength from each other and most of all from Christ, whose children we are.

† † † † †

CONCLUSION

By Ellen Scofield Silvers

The first time I met J. C. Pipes we were, appropriately enough, at Mars Hill College.

For years I had heard my father speak affectionately of "Carter Pipes" and mimic that wonderful, unique voice as he told the Pipes legends. And so one evening as my husband and I walked up the hill toward Stroup Dormitory, I heard him — and I knew instantly who it was. With much excitement I hurried up the steps to shake his hand and get to know him personally.

That was in 1962, and in the years since I have come to love deeply "Pipes" and his wonderful wife Ruth. I have had the opportunity of working with them on this book — such a blessed privilege as might be expected once in a lifetime.

As I have studied this man Pipes and have delved into the vast influence he has exerted in this beautiful mountain section of our state, I am overwhelmed at the deep respect and love that is expressed at every turn. Over and over as I have asked the question, "Do you know Pipes?", I have had the joyous experience of watching eyes light up, and enthusiasm mount. And always there is something, perhaps something small, more often something important, that this man of God had done for a church or association. His influence in this part of our state cannot possibly be over-estimated. For each story of stewardship and mission advance he has told here, there are probably twenty or more untold. He is truly in every sense of the word the pioneer of Baptist mountain preachers.

Not only in the mountains of North Carolina, but throughout all Southern Baptist work J. C. Pipes has made a name for himself. On June 5, 1959, he was chosen one of six speakers at a conference on Motivations for the Ministry, sponsored by the Lilly Foundation, at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. In this study by research men and

denominational executives from all over America, the concern was to discuss why men enter the ministry. Said Wayne E. Oates of Southern Seminary, "They wanted the person in America who could most wholeheartedly represent the point of view that God calls men to the ministry, that the ministry is a gift of God's calling grace. Yet, they wanted such a man who also was committed to the education of the ministry with a whole heart . . . I was asked whom I would recommend, and immediately J. C. Pipes came to my mind. He is a gem of purest ray serene on both these counts. They invited Brother Pipes to talk with the group."

After the lengthy conference was over and Mr. Pipes had captured the respect and love of the scholars during that week of research, one of the psychoanalysts, according to Dr. Oates, said: "Pipes knows something my students do not know. He knows the Bible! He knows he is called of God, but he is a man of astounding humility and sound judgment."

Concluded Dr. Oates, "We were all moved with awe and wonder to see the way in which this uncomplicated and dedicated preacher of the hills could communicate with the sophisticated research men of the cities."

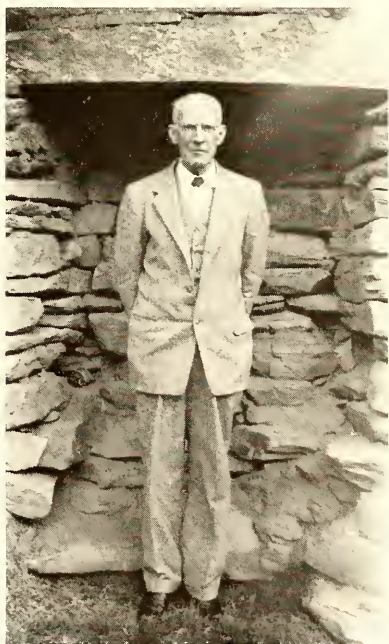
J. C. Pipes has been honored in other ways by those who love him, and one tribute came to him in connection with his beloved Mars Hill College. On July 2, 1959 — shortly after his Lilly Foundation experience — during the annual week of Christian Study and Fellowship, Mr. Pipes was the guest of honor for "J. C. Pipes Day," and a tremendous day it was for him. That evening he was the guest of honor at a banquet in the dining hall of the College, with many testimonies to his life and service. In his tribute to J. C. Pipes which began the program for the evening, C. W. Bazemore said of Mr. Pipes: "J. C. Pipes has stood up to preach in little Baptist meeting houses in faraway mountain coves; he has witnessed to lost men in lonesome places up and down these hills and valleys; he has travelled in heat and cold to reach the last outpost where the Word of God might fall on listening ears and ready hearts. Here is a preacher who has stood in great churches with that



Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Pipes as they worked together in a Vacation Bible School in the Newfound Association.



Mars Hill Pastors' School, 1962. J. C. Pipes in the midst of one of life's greatest moments.



J. C. Pipes in front of the chimney of his birthplace at Darby, North Carolina.

same vital, fearless message of a crucified, risen, triumphant Lord that he has known and loved all his days.

“Carter Pipes has, like Moses, stood on mountain tops to commune with Jehovah God, and then gone eagerly down into the valleys where lost people were waiting to hear him . . . Mountain people with little schooling, fishermen on the Carolina coasts, masses of humble folk whose ears were open to plain speech, have been blessed by the vital, powerful messages of this man who so loved and understood the hearts and minds of people in every walk of life.”

Even after the memorable “J. C. Pipes Day” was over, letters poured in, letters showing the depth of feeling of Baptist people for this man. Wrote Earle L. Bradley: “Eternity alone will reveal your contribution to the Baptists of North Carolina — and I think eternity alone will reveal the love and respect of North Carolina Baptists for you.” Claude F. Gaddy said, “I have come to appreciate you and your distinct contributions to our work,” and from Nane Starnes came these words: “In a peculiar way he has loved and lived for the preachers and churches of the great western section of North Carolina.”

And yet it is in the personal encounter with J. C. Pipes that you come to realize his greatness. This summer as we studied and worshipped together at the annual Week of Christian Study and Fellowship at Mars Hill, Mr. Pipes, my husband, a pastor friend, and I decided to make a historic trek “back to Bethel” — back to Mr. Pipes’ first pastorate at Flag Pond, Tennessee.

We began in the afternoon that hard climb from Mars Hill to the Tennessee line. As we went dipping and darting around the hairpin turns that are so evident on that road, the mountains gradually became more rugged and steep. Fleeting my thoughts turned to the pioneers who must have traversed these very hills as, watching Mr. Pipes point out a creek here and a path there, I suddenly knew that he was truly a modern day pioneer himself! To listen to him describe that eighteen-mile walk to Flag Pond and back from Mars Hill — and de-

scribe it wonderfully clearly — was amazing. I remembered something that C. W. Bazemore had said on “J. C. Pipes Day,” and somehow it fitted: “God gave to Carter Pipes the gifts of a strong body, a keen mind, a great soul, and a heart big enough to love the last lonesome, lost man, woman, boy and girl he could reach.”

What a trip! In a car somehow the full impact is missed, but even so one is able to get a small idea by allowing the imagination full sway. I could not but wonder how many young preachers now would make such a trip.

When we arrived in the town of Flag Pond, we of course went immediately to the Flag Pond Baptist Church. The old church is long since gone, but the new one is there, on the very same plot of ground. The pastor, Frank D. Proffitt, was away, but his gracious wife Polly showed us all through the small, dignified church building. Through the windows, tinted a soft rose, the light furniture and new organ showed to good advantage, and it was plain to be seen that Mr. Pipes was glad he had come.

From the church we rode around the community, and Mr. Pipes was readily able to point out this old home, that old barn, or this road leading to Hogskin, or Rice Creek, or some other such place. We visited in one home, that of Mrs. Jesse Cornett.

I shall never forget that first encounter as we walked up on the porch — the four of us must have been a strange sight in that small place on a weekday afternoon, but Mr. Pipes went right to the door and knocked vigorously. When Mrs. Cornett’s sister came to the door, he said, “I know you. I baptized you!”

She looked very carefully at him. “No, you didn’t,” she said, “Brother * * * * * baptized me.”

“Then I baptized your sister,” Mr. Pipes went on determinedly.

There was a long, significant pause, and then suddenly the door fairly flew open. “You’re Brother Pipes!! Come in!”

And then such a homecoming as there was in that

home!! Remembrances flew thick and fast as people were discussed and events gone over, and church history recalled. Wisely, I think, my husband, our friend, Rev. Clarence Jones, and I sat quietly — just enjoying the happy confusion.

With much accompanying laughter, Mr. Pipes remembered the good brother from that church who had stood with several others on the porch of the local store one Saturday and announced, "We've got to pay the preacher. I believe in paying the preacher! And to prove it, I want you to know I pay this one twenty-five cents a year!"

But quickly, as though to be fair, Mr. Pipes recalled one time when he was invited into the home of this same gentleman for the evening meal. It was during a season of revival, and when he arrived at the appointed time, there was seemingly no one home. The table was set with warm food, but the house was empty of people. Walking toward the barn to seek his host, Mr. Pipes said that he heard that good Christian man inside the barn in earnest prayer for the night's meeting. A few steps farther on, he heard the wife praying.

Soon the meal went on as planned, but that night at the church, before time for the sermon, this church member stood up and said, "I know that Miss So-and-so is going to be saved tonight — and she knows it too! This began an earnest time of soul-searching in that church, Mr. Pipes recalled, until many did come, and he didn't even preach at all that evening!

And so our visit flew, and as we left Flag Pond that afternoon, tired but happy, it became for me a cherished memory to keep — a living page in the history of J. C. Pipes.

However, though Mr. Pipes has lived a long and fruitful life, he is by no means idle today. Still vitally concerned that people have the comfort and joy of knowing Jesus Christ as Saviour in a personal way, he is now working with the Buncombe County Baptist Association as representative at Memorial Mission Hospital in Asheville. In this capacity Mr. Pipes acts as chaplain to out-of-town patients and local patients with no church

affiliation. He is available to any patient upon request, and he assists in special problems with patients as requested by hospital personnel. Said the hospital Administrator in a letter to the association, "On behalf of the hospital we would like to express our deep appreciation to the Buncombe County Baptist Association for providing the services of Mr. Pipes."

And so over the years the tributes of love and respect have come for this wonderfully vital and dedicated man of God. To know him and feel the influence of his work has been an immeasurable joy. I join with those many to whom "Pipes" is a very special person — the personal envoy of the Almighty God to the Southern Baptists of these lovely mountains of North Carolina. For us he is truly the pioneer of mountain preachers.

* * *

Constantly as I have worked on this wonderful, inspirational story of J. C. Pipes, I have run across stories — "Pipes yarns" as they are sometimes referred to. I have not found elsewhere the proper place for them, and yet I would not have them excluded. Here, then, are some of the more well-known and oft-told anecdotes about J. C. Pipes.

The first is one told me personally. "My pipe," said Mr. Pipes, "was always a subject for much conversation. In a discussion one time with a holiness preacher," he went on, "the dear brother said, 'Pipes, I don't see how in the world you Baptists can smoke.' "

Answered Mr. Pipes, "Brother, it's this way. You folks preach tobacco and chew the Gospel, and we Baptists chew tobacco and preach the Gospel."

* * *

Tells Mr. Pipes, "One day when I was driving from Asheville toward Murphy, I picked up a boy who was hitchhiking. We talked awhile, I found out that he was a Bob Jones University boy, and he found out that I was a Baptist preacher."

"It wasn't long before I got out my pipe, and when I did, he said, 'Mr. Pipes, if the Lord had meant for you to smoke he'd have given you a smokestack.' "

"I didn't say anything — I just stopped the car, walked

around, opened his door and said, 'If the Lord had meant for you to ride, he'd have put wheels on you.'

"I won the argument."

* * *

Another one of equal richness from Mr. Pipes:
"One day when I went back to Murphy to visit I was talking to a physician friend, Dr. Hill.

"'How're you doing?' I asked.

"'Fine,' he replied.

"'Business all right?'

"'Oh, goodness, yes. Pipes, everybody's having babies — I never saw so many in my whole life. You know Hanging Dog, Slow Creek, Peachtree, Brasstown and Sweetwater? Well, I got babies lined up in every one of those places.'

"'Well, Doc, do you get paid well?' I wanted to know.

"Dr. Hill answered, 'If you don't believe they pay me, you go down there in my back yard and look at all the pumpkins I got.'

"I asked, 'Do you take pumpkins for payment?'

"'With a grin, he said, 'Humph. I take anything they give me.'"

* * *

W. A. Huneycutt, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Valdese, North Carolina, recalls that J. C. Pipes was the first person who ever made this statement about marriage: "When the minister says, 'These two shall become as one, he is never able to tell them which one.'"

* * *

Another from Mr. Pipes:

"I thought I knew every little church and road in western North Carolina until one day while visiting in the hospital I was given the name of a lady who listed her church as Hogpen Baptist Church.

"I said to her, 'Are you really a member of Hogpen Church?'

"'Yes,' she said.

"I thought I knew all the Baptist churches in western North Carolina, but I never heard of this one. Where is it?" I asked.

“She said, ‘It’s on Chigger Hill on Pecker-wood Road.’
“I later learned that it was just over the line in Georgia.”

* * *

“Mr. Huggins and I were traveling through western North Carolina,” recounts Mr. Pipes, “and we were discussing the limitations of many of the pastors in formal education. I said to him, ‘I’d rather hear a man say ‘I seen something’ than to hear him say ‘I saw something’ when he hadn’t really seen anything.’ ”

* * *

“I have kind of a mixed up family,” says Mr. Pipes, “and one night I made a statement in a meeting, and a man questioned me about it. I said I knew about youngsters, because I had five or six myself.

“He called to me after the service and said, ‘Now which is it: do you have five or six children?’

“I said, ‘Brother, you come tomorrow night and I will try to clear up this statement.’

“So the next night I said, ‘There is a brother here who wants me to clear up my statement last night that I have five or six children. I’m going to try. My first wife and I had two, my second wife was a widow and she had two, and she and I had three. My third wife and I have one and we got another one from the orphanage. Now you figure it out.’ ”

* * *

“I had several problems in my early married life,” states Mr. Pipes. “I never was lazy — I was always ready to work when a job could be found. But I watched many of my friends marry and almost starve. I vowed that when I got married I would show them how to make a living for a family.

“Well, I got married and moved out to my own two-room home. I had made a crop that summer, and my father gave us four bushels of irish potatoes and so did hers. By early spring about all we had to eat was potatoes, corn bread, and molasses.

“One day my landlord said to me, ‘My wife and I are coming over next Sunday to eat dinner with you.’

“I was up a tree. I had no money to buy food, so I said to my wife, ‘Cook those ‘taters every way you know how.’”

“Sunday came and on the table were potatoes cooked in at least a half dozen ways. One dish looked like cooked apples. Finally when all had eaten of every other dish except that one, my landlord said, ‘Carter, please pass the apples.’”

“I said, ‘Mark, I’m sorry. That’s ‘taters too!’”

* * *

As an appropriate close, I have chosen a story which was meant to be included in the book. But the more I studied it, the more I realized that this story embodies the very heart of missions — which in turn is the heart of J. C. Pipes. Here, then, we end our study of “Pipes” with his own analysis of himself, his vocation, and his sense of mission.

“HOW I DISCOVERED I WAS A BIG PREACHER”

How did I discover this important fact? Well, I once went to the Bladen Association to work in a school of missions. When I arrived they gave me a list of the missionaries and the church where each of us was to work. I looked down the list to find my name and I came to this: Dr. J. C. Pipes.

“Who is this?” I thought. “I’m J. C. Pipes, not Dr. Pipes! Dr. Pipes would be a big preacher, and I’m a little preacher.”

Then I thought again. They were right — I am a big preacher. How can this be?

Many years I have been tithing my income into my church, and a part of my tithe has gone into the Cooperative Program. Since money is coined man that means that part of me has gone all over the world wherever the Gospel is preached through our missionaries. I have been preaching the Gospel through more than a thousand foreign missionaries and more than eleven hundred home missionaries. I am a teacher in all our

Baptist Colleges; I am working in our Baptist Orphanage; I am a doctor working with the sick in our Baptist Hospital; I am a teacher in all our seminaries; I am working in all the work of our Baptist program around the world.

I am a big preacher! How happy I am that God in His wisdom granted to the leaders of our great host of Southern Baptists the wisdom to work out the Cooperative Program, whereby the least of us could be great preachers and great servants. I thank Him that he has granted me the knowledge and insight to grasp a vision of this.

I am growing old and am retired from the active ministry, but yet I can go on around the world in my tithes and offerings preaching, teaching, and healing.

The End

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